

Ms.

AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

People of ^KMaryland,

ON THE

'ORIGIN, PROGRESS AND PRESENT STATE

OF

FRENCH AGGRESSION,

WITH A SKETCH OF THE

INFAMOUS ATTEMPTS TO DEGRADE THE

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

AND SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE

LATE PROCEEDINGS IN

CONGRESS;

BY A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

PHILADELPHIA :

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AN ADDRESS, &c.

THAT a people free and independent as are the citizens of the United States, should sometimes differ about the management of their interior concerns, is not to those acquainted with the history of a free people, either a subject of regret or object of suspicion. To me however, who have ever indulged a high admiration of the union promptitude and energy which has once so eminently characterised the American people, in meeting at the threshold a meditated attack upon their rights; the conduct and impressions of some of our countrymen are objects of melancholy speculation. At a time when a potent and perfidious nation, is prostrating all the great landmarks of national intercourse, which have been sanctified by the usages of ages; when she is breaking down all the barriers of national law and right which stand in the way of her wild projects of ambition; when the cries of our plundered, much injured and insulted country, call aloud for every American, to stand shoulder to shoulder, in defence of our rights, when we know not how soon we must fight pro aris et focis; it has remained for the sagacity of modern patriotism to discover the singular utility of disseminating the foulest calumnies against the purity and wisdom of our government. Whilst with an immovable and opposing front, they meet the storm of French insult, firm as Mount Atlas, where storms

spend in vain their violence, and billows dash to pieces at his feet ; whilst “ they contemplate in the “ calm lights of mild philosophy” those proud and arrogant pretensions, which go to deprive us of every right, but such as it may please the terrible republic, to leave us possessed of ; they take a firm and manly position, and in the language of excessive sensibility declare their determination to oppose in its outset, every supposed executive encroachment. That those gentlemen therefore, who say they possess, under our government at this time, all the privileges and happiness to which their hearts can aspire, and are only vigilant of executive measures because of their tendency to establish principles which may operate in future ; that those who possess the highest admiration of the American patriots of seventy-six, and such abhorrence for their opponents, should endeavour to brand with the epithet of Tory those who oppose the establishment of pretensions which leave us dependant upon the will of a foreign power, for the most important rights, is to me a remarkable fact in the history of political party. Such however is the fact. To criminate without mercy those who talk of defending themselves against the outrages and piratical depredations of an abandoned government, which plunders our commerce, maltreats our citizens, rejects with disdain two successive missions, who, after robbing us of between fifteen and twenty millions of dollars at sea, is now preparing ruin for our merchants, by compelling them to lay up their ships to rot in their harbours, who demands that if we expect to protect the residue of our commerce we must pay a sum equal to the whole extent of our resources and then she will talk with us upon the subject of our disputes ; who threatens us if we do not comply with these demands we shall probably meet the fate of Venice, and who issues a decree saying in effect, you shall have no commerce ; to criminate all those

who talk of opposition to these measures is the appropriate character of an exclusive patriotism. I do not therefore expect to be exempted from my share of these imputations; whilst I attempt to place in what I conceive a proper point of view, the aggressive system of France and vindicate the conduct of our national government. It is the intention of the writer to take a concise view of the most prominent features of French aggression; to shew that we have borne it with a patience unparallelled in the annals of national philosophy; that nothing short of an abandonment of our claims to independence, could have exempted us from our embarrassment and close with a view of the means by which our country has been brought to a most awful situation. To such as may have enlisted themselves under the banners of party, who would justify the murder of one half of our citizens, provided it could be justified by an impeachment of, and a gratification of an unconquerable and deep rooted hatred against our own administration; to those half taught politicians, who know nothing of liberty but the name, and who scandalize republicanism by its application to the most tyrannical government that ever degraded the dignity of men; to those who have been already furnished with the means of information of our unwearied exertions to maintain the relations of friendship with the French republic, and still ascribe our embarrassments to ourselves; to those who are convinced of their errors and whose false pride so far rides over their patriotism as to forbid them to retract, to those who do not address these remarks. To such as may have been led astray by misrepresentation, who, from the numerous accusations and calumnies which have been industriously propagated, and which, from the boldness and frequency with which they have been made, may be induced to think it is time the French were invited here as they have been elsewhere, to

overtun institutions of such systematic corruption as our government has recently been represented to be ; to such as wish to know and not such as mean to continue blind to the truth and their country's interest, are these sheets addressed. From the course which I have prescribed to myself, it will be perceived it will be unavoidable not to repeat many things which have heretofore been before the public. To such however as have had an opportunity of having recourse to our diplomatic correspondence with the French republic, and the various publications of the times, it will be my apology that the great mass of those whom I address have been deprived of these opportunities, and that to collect to a point the numerous and important facts, relative to this subject, is but little compatible with the ordinary pursuits of domestic life. Let us then enquire how far the acts of France have corresponded with those declarations of friendship, in which she certainly has not once been wanting, and how far that enthusiasm in her cause which animated the American people, and in which the author of these pages very largely participated, have been appreciated and requitted by her.

On the 9th of May, 1793, the national convention issued a decree, the principal articles of which are as follows :—1st. The French vessels of war and privateers shall stop and bring into the ports of the Republic, neutral vessels, which shall be found laden in whole or in part, either with provisions belonging to neutral powers, and bound to enemy ports, or with merchandizes belonging to enemies.—2nd. The merchandizes belonging to enemies is declared good prize, and confiscated for the benefit of the captors. Provisions belonging to neutrals shall be paid for at their value at the place for which they were destined. It is important to be remarked that this decree took place about one month prior to the orders issued by Great Britain, at which we universally exhibited so

much indignation, and which was considered so essential a violation of our rights, and by those too who now call it madness to oppose the system of France; that it was considered as a national degradation to postpone reprisal until one effort for redress should be made by negociation. This decree has been repeatedly admitted by France herself, to have been a plain violation of the 23d and 24th articles of our treaty; but that same spirit which still prompts the devotees of France, to excuse her most atrocious acts, which justified whilst they were acting all the horrid butcheries of Robespierre, which has ascribed the robberies of Victor Hugues and others, to any thing but an unprincipled spirit of rapine, and which still ascribes all our embarrassments to a desire for war on our part with France, and see nothing wrong but in our administration; this spirit soon prompted to the discovery of pretexts by which this plain and open violation of treaty and national faith, and which we now find, was the embryo of her full grown system of plunder, has been excused. It is excused upon the ground of a supposed project on the part of the coalesced powers, to take all means, lawful and unlawful, to cut off provisions from France. To make a particular enquiry into a subject which has been already so much controverted, would divert me from more important enquiries, and I the more cheerfully decline it, since admitting the necessity of the measure so far as it related to provisions, the capture of enemies goods on board of our vessels, in the face of the treaty, still remains to be justified. If too, the capture of provisions were the result of necessity, the non-payment of the money for them, at a price arbitrarily fixed by the government, the cruel and unnecessary detention of our vessels, both in direct contravention of their own decree, and the numerous embarrassments and personal sufferings to which our citizens were exposed, I presume were not all of ne-

cessity. This decree was not only prior to those of Great Britain, but it was more comprehensive as it embraced all kinds of provisions, and those of England extended only to corn, meal and flour* More criminal because in open violation of that treaty which she was pressing us not only rigorously to fulfil, but to extend beyond its letter and spirit to the commitment of our neutrality, and more cruel, because we looked for no friendship from Great Britain having shewn her none, but from our enthusiasm in the cause of France ; if we were not to look for friendship, we had a right at least to expect a compliance with the stipulations of treaty and common respect for our national rights. It is not my intention, however, to enquire, which of these orders were the most exceptionable or to excuse the one by the superior iniquity of the other ; since both have evidenced an evident disregard to our rights. Our minister (Mr. Morris) did not fail to remonstrate against this decree, and on the 23d of May obtained a modification of it, so as to exempt us from its operation, and this was notified to Mr. Morris by the minister of exterior relations (L. Brun) with these remarks : " You will there find a new confirmation of those principles, from which the French people will never depart, with regard to their good friends and allies the United States." What wonderful evidence of friendship to make a decree in express contravention of treaty ? But notwithstanding this profession of fraternity on the 28th of the same month ; and only two days after this friendly declaration, this modifying decree was again revoked. The world will naturally be led to enquire the powerful motive for this sudden change. It was no more nor less than the unconquerable necessity of enabling the privateer which had captured

* I mean the orders of the 8th June.

the rich American ship Laurens to enjoy her spoils. What a glorious thing is this necessity and how inexhaustible the resources of a nation which possesses the happy faculty of discovering her necessities? Cæsar raised an army to get money and employed his money to procure an army: France has found out the necessity of conquering the world, and the auxiliary necessity of plundering neutrals to gratify that necessity. Our minister again remonstrated, and as they perfectly understood the happy expedient of annulling and enacting at a moment's warning all the rights of nations, as they could give their decrees a retrospective operation and as it would only cost them the price of a few fraternal expressions; they again exempted us from the operation of this decree on the 1st of July. This circumstance was again notified to Mr. Morris by their new minister (Defourgues) with this assurance: "I am very happy in being able to give you this new proof of the fraternal sentiments of the French people for their allies, and their determination to the utmost of their power to fulfil the treaties subsisting between the two nations." Reader! Will you believe it? On the 27th of the same month this decree was again modified, so as to subject to capture enemy goods and provisions on board of our vessels. It is here to be remarked, that what we considered and demanded as a matter of right, she considered it as an act of great generosity and friendship to concede and instead of apologizing for these violations, boasted of the disposition she had talked of, to abstain from future injury. For my own part I should have preferred (and I believe our plundered merchants will concur in the sentiment) to have heard more about payment for the provisions she had taken, and less about fraternity. From this time, however, we heard no more about their friendship, and henceforward, spoiliations continued to be committed upon

our commerce, our vessels detained in her ports, their cargoes taken by the government and never paid for, our seamen imprisoned, and violences and outrages perpetrated without remorse and without number. In order to enable my countrymen more fully to appreciate the profound and sagacious arguments of those who ascribe all our commercial embarrassments to the British treaty, and in order to shew that whilst we were in a flame about British depredations, our eyes have been closed to the enormities which were at the same time carrying on against us on the part of our dear sister France, I beg leave to introduce the following documents : In the first place I will present to your view an extract from the letter of Mr. Skipwith to Mr. Monroe, dated October 1794—" At your request I now lay before you a statement of the innumerable embarrassments which our commerce has for a long time and still continues to suffer in the different ports of the French Republic. It is evident if the government does not soon remedy the incessant abuses and vexations practised daily upon our merchants, vessels, captains and crews : the trade of the United States with France must cease. I cannot give you an ample detail of all the inconveniences and oppressions which have been thrown upon our commerce ; many of the consuls and agents to whom you have written, to forward such documents to my office, not having yet done it ; besides it would take volumes to expose them at full length. From the communications however already received from the different ports, and from the information I have received from the captains present, I can assure you there are near three hundred sail of American vessels now in the ports of France, all of which have suffered or are suffering more or less difficulty and delay—the hardships of which I have chiefly to complain, and out of which there grows incalculable evils, may be developed un-

der four general heads—1st, the capture, indiscriminately, of our vessels at sea, by the vessels at war of the republic—2d, the impossibility of Americans selling their cargoes, and receiving payment in the ports to which they are conducted, or of their own accord arrive—3d, the difficulties and procrastination which they find in their transactions with the Boards of Marine and Commerce—4th, the non-compliance, or heretofore delay, in fulfilling the contracts made by the agents of the French republic in America for provisions. The seizure of our vessels at sea often gives rise to the most serious and well founded complaints. The stripping them of their officers and crews, who are generally replaced by boys and inexperienced hands in order to be conducted to ports, expose them to much injury, and sometimes to total loss; the confinement of our sailors taken out of those vessels, the seals upon their cargoes, and above all, the sending the papers to the Commissioners of Marine at Paris, involves the most unwarrantable hardships and delays; and indeed I am sorry to add, that all of our vessels experience some of these difficulties, and indeed such as arrive with cargoes on account of the republic, months elapsing before the captains can get their clearances and papers, many of which are often lost or mislaid; to insert the whole of this long letter would occupy more of this address than I am willing it should do. After dilating very fully and forcibly upon each of the foregoing heads, he produces one hundred and seventy cases, which were involved in some one or other of the abovementioned difficulties; and in addition to these, one hundred and three others, which had been detained by the embargo at Bordeaux. This, Mr. Skipwith was, at that time our agent, and was since the American consul at Paris, the particular friend of Mr. Monroe, and appointed by his request, and a warm friend to the French revolution. Let us now see what Mr.

Monroe says upon this subject : " Upon my arrival here (the 2d of August, 1794) I found our affairs, as it was known before I sailed, in the worst possible situation. The treaty between the two republics was violated ; our commerce was harrassed in every quarter, and in every article, even that of tobacco not excepted ; our seamen taken on board of our vessels often abused, generally imprisoned and treated in other respects like the subjects of the powers at war with them." I beg leave here, also, to refer to the following memorial presented to Congress by upwards of forty of the most respectable merchants of Philadelphia.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled :

The Memorial and Petition of the subscribers, citizens of the United States, dwelling in Philadelphia,

Respectfully Sheweth,

THAT your memorialists and divers others in the regular course of their trade, in the years 1793, 1794 and 1795, invested very large sums of money in provisions and other merchandizes, suited to the West India market, and sent them thither where many cargoes were sold to the officers of Colonial Administration of the Republic of France, to be paid for in cash or colonial produce ; many others were taken by force by the said officers from the supercargoes and consignees, at prices arbitrarily fixed by themselves, to be paid for in produce at rates and terms of credit fixed at their pleasure, and that others have been arrested on the high seas, carried into their ports and taken for the use of the Republic without

any stipulated price or contract : That your memorialists confidently believe, that the amount of property belonging to the citizens of the United States, thus delivered to and taken by the Administrative Bodies of the French Republic in the West Indies, exceeds two millions of dollars now in arrear, for which your memorialists and others concerned, have no mode of obtaining payment, satisfaction or redress ; that the usual course is, after taking the cargo by force and duress, to detain the vessels under pretence of paying in produce, until the masters and crews are wearied with idleness, sickness, delay and insult, so as to be willing to return either altogether without payment or with such small portions thereof, as scarcely to pay the freight and charges occasioned by these long delays, whereby in most instances the whole capital has been left behind, and in those instances where a considerable part of the cargo has been paid for in colonial produce, the expences of demurrage have consumed almost the whole, as by vouchers ready to be laid before the House or a Committee thereof, will abundantly appear.

Your memorialists further shew, that some of the earliest sufferers among them, applied personally and by memorials, to citizens Genet, Fauchet and Adet, the first and succeeding Ministers of the French Republic for redress without obtaining it : they also applied by memorial to the President of the United States, who referred them to the Secretary for the Department of State, whose advice they pursued in committing their claims to James Monroe, Esq. Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States to the Republic of France, at the time of his embarkation. That although your memorialists are perfectly satisfied that the Executive authority of the Union hath done all within its power to procure redress to your memorialists, yet it has not had the desired effect.

Your memorialists further represent, that they had

hoped that some arrangement would have been assented to, whereby the debts due from the Republic of France to the citizens of the United States might have been discharged out of the debt due to her from the United States and under this expectation they exercised patience; but finding that money funded and transferred to an agent of the Republic, all hope from that resource is vanished: your memorialists feel the more concern that while provision has been made by the Executive of the Union for obtaining from other nations; a redress for spoliations, committed on their commerce, no measures hitherto adopted have been successful for procuring satisfaction from that nation which the merchants of this have shewn so decided an affection to, by supplying their Islands with provisions and necessaries at a greater risk than attended any other branch of their trade, supplies that were absolutely necessary to their Colonies and which they could from no other place nor in any other manner be furnished with.

Your memorialists therefore pray that the Legislature will take their suffering case into consideration and afford them such relief and protection as to their wisdom shall seem consistent with right and justice.

<i>Montgomery & Newbolds,</i>	<i>Walter Stewart,</i>
<i>Nathan Field;</i>	<i>David H. Conyngham,</i>
<i>William Ls. Sonntag & Co.</i>	<i>James M'Curach,</i>
<i>John Steinmetz,</i>	<i>Edward Dunant,</i>
<i>William Bell,</i>	<i>Isaac Hazlehurst & Son,</i>
<i>James Yard,</i>	<i>For John Willcocks,</i>
<i>James Vanuxem,</i>	<i>George Armroyd,</i>
<i>Summerl & Brown,</i>	<i>Nalbro' & John Frazier,</i>
<i>Grubb & Mather,</i>	<i>E. Dutilh & Wachsmuth,</i>
<i>Daniel Vincent Thunn,</i>	<i>James Gamble,</i>
<i>Petit & Bayard,</i>	<i>Amb. Vasse,</i>
<i>Conyngham, Nesbit & Co.</i>	<i>John M'Culloh,</i>
<i>George Davis,</i>	<i>John Rutherford, (capt.)</i>

<i>Nathaniel Lewis & Sons,</i>	<i>Charles Massey,</i>
<i>John Clark,</i>	<i>John Maybin,</i>
<i>Thomas Fitzsimons,</i>	<i>John Gardiner, jun.</i>
<i>Philip Care,</i>	<i>John Savage,</i>
<i>Charles White</i>	<i>Edward Carrell,</i>
<i>Clement and Taylor,</i>	<i>Maddock, Jackson & Co.</i>
<i>Joseph Brown,</i>	<i>Philip & Thos. Reilly.</i>
<i>John Taggart,</i>	

Many of these outrages took place before Great Britain issued her orders, a greater number before the nomination of Mr. Jay and the whole of those alluded to by Mr. Skipwith and Monroe, and the greater part of those mentioned in the merchants memorial previous to the signature of the British treaty. But the French government possesses the happy talent of giving a retrospect to their decrees, and her advocates in this country have discovered that injuries upon our commerce and violations of treaty committed, many of them more than two years before the final ratification, more than eighteen months before its signature by Mr. Jay, and nearly twelve months previous to Mr. Jay's nomination are all ascribable to the British treaty. But after thus plundering us on the ocean, violating that asylum which treaty, the rights of humanity and the laws of nations ought to have secured to us in her ports, it is said, she again determined to draw closer the bands which unite the sister republics—and let us attend to the period and circumstances under which this kind and sisterly act took place. On the 15th of November 1794, the joint committees of public safety, finance, commerce and supplies passed a decree by which they prohibited all future molestations of our trade at sea or detentions in her ports except that they were still to capture neutral vessels with enemy goods. This decree also ordered all claims of Americans to be adjusted—and

on the 4th of January following, their orders for capturing neutrals with enemy goods, other than certain specified articles of contraband, to be revoked. Thus were all their obnoxious decrees revoked and things restored to the state in which they stood by our treaty. Now let us see what it was that induced this mighty republic to give orders to the committee of public safety to take measures for drawing closer the bonds which united the two republic—Mr. Monroe tells our government it was to be ascribed chiefly to his exertions. I am ready to admit that if unusual complaisance and acquiescence could have produced any effect, his exertions were calculated to do it—but I cannot believe the French government revoked these several decrees, and conformed her future regulations to our treaty, because Mr. Monroe told them if it was of any advantage to them to violate this treaty and our neutral rights, we would not only bear it with patience, but with pleasure. I must ascribe her reconciliation to other causes, and these causes are at hand. It will be recollected that about this time, France being much straightened in her finances, made application to our minister to borrow five millions of dollars—He encouraged her plan and pressed it upon our government. About this time also, Mr. Monroe was informed by our secretary of state, that there was little prospect of settling by negotiation our differences with Great Britain. About this time too France became much interested to cultivate the friendship of all neutrals—says Mr. Monroe “In this decision (referring to the decree of the committees of 18th November) they were probably the more confirmed, by the necessity of cultivating Denmark and Sweden at the present moment, from whence great resources are drawn in support of the war whose councils are wielded by Bernstoff, a man believed to be well disposed to a reform in the exist-

ing governments of Europe, and whose fleets are combined with no friendly disposition towards England." It was at this time then when France wanted a loan of five million of dollars to be repaid if possible, (and as France was to be the judge of the possibility of payment) I will call it a grant, which, to have been acceded to would have been tantamount to a declaration of war against England. It was when that object which had been the source of all her endeavors, from Genet's mission to that time, and the disappointment of which was the cause of that alienation which Mr. Monroe found on his arrival; it was at a time when she cherished the expectation of involving us, Denmark and Sweden in the war with England; that she relaxed and began to think it worth while to pay some little respect to the rights of neutrals. Why was it that France was so much alienated on Mr. Monroe's arrival as he says about Mr. Jay's mission? Was France to determine for us whether we should obtain satisfaction for the injuries committed by Great Britain, by negotiation or war? No, she does not openly pretend to this, because she knows she could not support it, yet it was because we determined to negotiate and not because of the particulars of the negotiation at which she was offended; for how could she know before the negotiation commenced the result of the negotiation? It was that we determined to maintain peace that she was alienated; this was the source of her displeasure. Contrary, however, to her's and Mr. Monroe's expectations, this treaty was concluded on the 19th of November, and notified to Mr. Monroe on the 26th of December. Finding now that her blustering hauteur and her complaints could not prevent us from settling our differences as we pleased, and thinking it would not be impossible, by the means of her party in this country, to prevent its ratification; she from this time determined to try artifice and profes-

sions of friendship. As however she supposed to continue to plunder our trade and maltreat our citizens, would prove unfavorable to her views, she determined there should be no complaints on this score ; and accordingly from this time until she found all her exertions fail in preventing its ratification ; we experienced an entire exemption from depredations, and this is the only period from May 1793 to this moment, that we have not been under her lash. Still however compensations for past losses and payments for provisions taken by the government, were very inconsiderable, and to this day mostly remain due. Having found all her exertions in vain for involving us in war with England, by failing in defeating the treaty ; being angered and mortified in her frequent disappointments, she determined upon more rigorous measures than ever. Accordingly on the 2d of July, 1796, she issued a decree to the following effect :— “ All neutral powers shall be notified without delay, that the flag of the French Republic will treat neutrals in the same manner that they shall suffer the English to treat them.” From this decree, as was by us expected, and as by France, no doubt was intended, have we suffered those acts of piratical outrage which have never been equalled since the days of the Buccaneers. Well may her corsairs exclaim, “ oh ! the glorious uncertainty of the law.” By this decree has it been left to the arbitrary judgment of every depredating scoundrel, to make his own sense of justice the measure of our rights, his thirst of pillage our only standard of security. By the French consuls at Malaga and Cadiz, it has been construed to authorize the capture of American vessels bound to English ports ; by Victor Hugues and Lebas, in addition to that, the capture of our vessels with contraband goods on board, even bound to their own ports, under pretext that the British were suffered to come here and purchase horses, which no law of na-

tions forbids; and when we had been in the habit not merely of selling horses to the French, to be carried away in French vessels, but of supplying them with our own vessels. Under pretext that the islands captured by the British, were surrendered through the perfidy of their inhabitants; all vessels bound to or from such ports were declared good prize, under pretence that the British were taking all neutral vessels bound to or from French ports; Santhonax, Raimond, &c. declared all vessels bound to or from British ports, good prize. However these decrees exceed all bounds of decency, and however abominable in their pretensions, their execution has far exceeded them in atrocity. Our vessels have not only been captured, but when tried at all, tried by judges who were to share in the plunder; oftentimes condemned without even the forms of trial, and when they have mortified us with a formal appearance of trial, they have not even admitted the captured to a defence. As if these decrees were not sufficiently extensive, they have attempted to bribe sailors to swear they were going to British ports, and if they have failed in bending their virtues into a compliance, have used instruments of torture.* They have taken property by force in their own ports, because they wanted it; they have imprisoned our seamen, nearly starved and exchanged them with the British for Frenchmen. They have fired upon, distressed and burnt our vessels. But among all the acts of perfidy by which this new Algiers has disgraced herself, the most abominable is that which will be found in the communications of the Commissioners of the leeward Islands to the Executive Directory. I will here state an extract from the speech of Pastoret, in the Council of Five Hundred (who, it seems was too honest to live in France) in which he makes a concise statement of the sub-

* Thamb-screwing was in one instance made use of;

stance of this communication, and some comments which do equal honor to his head and heart.

“SAYS Pastoret, read in the official Journal of the Directory (17th Prairial, 5th June) an extract of a letter on the 6th Ventose of this year, to the Minister of Marine, by the French Commissioners at the leeward Islands. They announce that, having found no resource in finance, and knowing the unfriendly dispositions of the Americans, in order that they might not miserably perish, they fitted out cruizers; that already 87 privateers were upon the ocean, and that for three months the Administration had subsisted and individuals had enriched themselves from the produce of prizes. They assert that it became their devotion and patriotism not to restrain themselves on account of all the pusillanimous considerations which were opposed to them. They also declare the decree of 15th Messidor, 2d July was unknown to them for five months after this period. But, say they, the revolting conduct of the Americans, and an indirect knowledge of the intentions of our government (France) made it a duty for us to order reprisals, even before the receipt of the official notification. They felicitate themselves that the vessels of that nation are daily taken, and declare that they have learnt from divers persons from the continent that the Americans were perfidious, corrupt the friends of England, and that in consequence their vessels no longer entered the French ports, unless conducted there by force. One thinks he dreams when he reads this letter; he thinks himself transported into a savage country, where men, not yet acknowledging the empire of morals and of laws,

commit crimes without shame and without remorse, and applaud themselves for robbery as Paulus Emilius or Cato would have applauded themselves for an eminent service performed for their country. Privateers armed against a friendly nation ! Reprisals when it is ourselves who make the attack ; reprisals against a nation who has never taken one of our vessels ! Riches acquired by the confiscation of the vessels of a nation which treaties unite us to, and from which no declaration of war has separated us ! You suppose they possess unfriendly dispositions, but tell me then in what they consist ; where, when, how, have they manifested them ? Alas ! I have already said that which you call unfriendly dispositions is to have afforded on an asylum to those whom guilt compelled to implore it. The agents who, without authority, having, according to their own confession, only an indirect knowledge of a presumed intention, caused the vessels of allies to be captured ; who commence a rupture upon the pretence that they fear it, who many months before they knew of the decree of 14th Messidor, infest the seas with privateers. The agents who denominate respect for treaties, pusillanimous considerations ; who call those perfidious, against whom they violate the public faith ; who decide as if possessed of sovereign power, whether an alliance still subsists ; whether or not it is necessary to enter into a state of war ; whilst the directory itself possesses not the right. All that the agents say, amounts to this—Having nothing wherewith to buy, I take ; I make amends for the property I take, by the piracies which enrich me, I finally defame those I have plundered. Thus robbery is justified by selfishness and calumny.”

All these several acts of plunder and outrage have been fully sanctioned by France herself ; having been informed of them and refused to redress them or punish

the authors of them, and indeed at this time, openly and boldly, persisting in the same measures herself. Whoever will read the late dispatches from our Envoys, will be sensible that this was not the system of her agents but her own. After having thus plundered, us without mercy, and outraged us without decency, after all her noise and clamor at home, and the criminations of her advocates here, about the violation of her rights by the British treaty, after having set up, contrary to her own doctrines in 1793 and 1794, that by the laws of nations free ships give freedom to goods, after contending that contrary to her own and all other writers on the law of nations, that certain articles, declared contraband by the British treaty, are not such by the general law, and establishing by her arbitrary ipse dixit, that these were grants to Britain : She all at once discovers that admitting all her constructions and demands in their fullest latitude, yet she had been under a mistake when she supposed that our treaty with Britain was a violation of her treaty with us. Yes, she discovers, that whatever grants were made to Britain if any were made, the same immediately became common to her, by virtue of the 2d article of her treaty with us ; by which she is put on the footing of the most favoured nation. In conformity to this doctrine she passes her decree of the 2d of March, 1797. This was done too without consulting us on the subject, and at the very time or a little after, she had dismissed our minister, who was instructed to enter into an explanation of our measures, and remove by any means which France might suggest, those parts, if any such there were, which might be supposed to bear hard upon her. But she goes on to put her own constructions upon both treaties, and pretends to conform her treaty to that with Britain. Sed multum abludit imago. Thus we see again she makes and unmakes treaties and the law of nations, with as little ceremo-

ny as she sends thousands of her citizens to the guillotine, and her legislators to Cayenne. One would suppose there exists no law of nations independent of the municipal regulations of France. She then proceeds to change her treaty, article by article, where she thinks she can make it better, and where it is good enough to declare it in force. Accordingly out of her abundant humanity and after her repeated exhortations to us to use vigorous measures of re-action against the British, for the imprisonment of our seamen ; she declares all Americans found on board of British vessels shall be treated as pirates. She also now declares, under pretext of this modification, what she had already declared, and had been acting under for almost four years (viz. from May 1793 ;) that enemies property shall not be protected in American vessels, and extends her list of contraband to the extent of the British treaty, and in fine adds all the beneficial articles of this treaty to her own, and discards all such as she finds disadvantageous. Since then the British treaty has been represented as so highly favourable to England, and since France has taken all its advantageous parts which she wished to have, and added them to her own ; it follows that she must be in a better situation than if we had made no treaty with her enemy. But it did not answer her purpose merely to modify her treaty, she wants a little plunder, and some part of her treaty must be found to give her a pretext for this purpose. " O ! the Role d'equipage, the Role d'equipage. I have now a glorious scene before me. You Americans have sailed to my ports during the whole of the war ; you have supplied us with provisions when we should otherwise have starved, when you have come here and we have known you to be Americans, we have known you to be neutrals although you had not the Role. We have, it is true, taken your provisions, but we did not take

them for want of the Role, but because we wanted them, and we promised to pay for them when we were able. But it is better to get them for nothing than to get them even for promises, and therefore let us declare the Role an indispensable requisite to the protection of American property and as no American vessel, now upon the seas, will be notified of this determination, we shall make prizes of all such as shall have departed without notice." This no doubt was the train of that pure and virtuous reasoning by which our dear and never to be satisfied allies were prompted to this sublime discovery. Under this decree have we severely felt the rod of French chastisement, for daring to make a treaty with England, not because we infringed her treaty, for she has by this decree acknowledged otherwise, and through Mr. Adet, declared all her rights saved by the clause in that treaty which declares it shall not derogate from pre-existing treaties.* Under this decree have three ships, the Asia, New-Jersey and Pigou been captured, whose cargoes have been supposed worth fifteen hundred thousand dollars, and the loss on which to the revenues of our country is estimated at between two and three hundred thousand dollars. Hundreds of others have been captured for the same cause. She has modified her treaty then, not as all other nations do, by mutual contract, but in the same way that she would establish a turnpike or canal, not by making one concession to obtain another as is the case when there are two parties to the contract, but by keeping all the advantages she had and taking what she pleased. Thus has she acted in the affairs of Europe, first she prostrates the boundaries of nations by annexing them to her territory and then says her constitution forbids a dismemberment. If her objections were well founded to the British treaty,

* Vide Mr. Adet's correspondence with Pickering, No. 131.

and if it were because of the stipulations of that treaty, that France was discontented, surely after her decree of March '97 she ought to have been satisfied. No said her advocates here, after she had without consulting us, undertaken to put herself upon the same footing with England, we ought to offer it to her, and this evidence of our friendship will have a good effect upon her and dispose her to conciliation—although there can be but little doubt that Mr. Pinckney's instructions were to that effect, yet the contrary was presumed even in Congress and the President was ordered by the answer of the House of Representatives, to make this offer, not to put her on as favorable a footing as other nations for she had already done that herself, but to make it out of complaisance. And whilst we were suggesting to the President the specific measures, which it was thought might conciliate the sovereign omnipotent Directory, so delicate were we of her feelings that we were even afraid to hope she would do us justice and satisfy the claims of our citizens.* After having given these directions to the President, because some gentlemen were afraid he did not feel disposed to make them of himself, and after he had appointed three of our most respectable citizens who were not only vested with ample powers but were (in order to meet the supposed ideas of French diplomatic etiquette) denominated ministers extraordinary : we supposed nothing further was wanting on our part to bring about a reconciliation—but it seems that instead of advancing we retrograde in our progress to reconciliation—for after continuing to plunder us as heretofore and refusing an audience to our ministers, she has issued a decree to this effect : That every ship found at sea, having on board a cargo which may consist entirely or in part of English commodities and merchandizes, shall be

* Vide debates of last session on Mr. Kittera's motion.

considered as lawful prize, whoever may be the owner of these commodities or merchandizes which are to be deemed contraband on this ground alone, that they come either from England or her possessions—Is it necessary to observe that the claims of a nation never before soared so high? She declares that Britain is haughty and perfidious, the tyrant of the seas, that it is necessary for the peace of mankind that she should be destroyed, that France should rule the sea as well as the land, and that all nations will find ample security for their freedom and their rights in her magnanimity and generosity. I suppose by this time Switzerland and Portugal, and Belgium, and Holland, and Italy might give us some information upon this subject, were it necessary to travel there, but I believe we shall find some useful hints, how far French generosity may be relied on, in our late dispatches. If France, whilst dominant upon the land, has every-where issued her infamous mandates and is resolving all the rights of nations into her sovereign will; it will be difficult to persuade any sober mind of a probable relaxation, when she shall become mistress of the ocean—But France says otherwise, and as she has always claimed the prerogative of instructing and compelling other nations to do what was in her opinion the most conducive to their interest, she tells them unless they are sold to England, they cannot think hard to have their property plundered, their citizens abused, and their merchants starved and their produce lie and rot upon their hands—for the object will legitimate the means. Thus such as she cannot bribe or persuade or frighten to combine with her in this mad crusade, the destruction of England, she determines, like the religious zealot, to force into her system of political orthodoxy by plunder and by rapine, those who will not voluntarily become her vassals and contribute in men and money to her glory and her triumphs, she

will scourge into her schemes and all who are not her friends shall be considered as her enemies. Let us however attend to the probable operation of this decree—In the first place it subjects to confiscation the vessels and cargoes which shall have on board one article of British manufacture. This at once strikes at all our trade to England, because she cannot purchase our produce unless we take her manufactures in return. In the next place the vessel and cargo is liable to condemnation for having on board any article, the production of British Dominions, but such productions, for instance, coffee, cotton, &c. cannot be distinguished from those of any other nation, and therefore all such productions will be liable to the same fate, and as our carrying trade was chiefly supported by these articles, I take it, it annihilates our carrying trade; our coasting vessels generally have on board some articles of British manufactures, and are frequently employed in carrying the produce of the country to the towns, to be exchanged for British goods, to be re-conveyed to the country; it strikes then almost at the root of the coasting trade; but it is said we may still export our produce, and that whilst we can do this, we can dispense with British or any other foreign manufactures. Were this the fact, it might still be worth the toil of the farmer to make this produce. But to what place and how it is to be exported; will you carry it to France? The same arbitrary will, which has dictated so many illegal acts, and which has already caused her to seize on property of neutrals in her own ports, and refuses to pay for it, will probably induce her to seize whatever you may carry there at present. Will you carry it to Spain, to Holland, or to any country under her influence? The same arbitrary authority which has ordered these countries to seize all British manufactures, even such as belonged to their own citizens, may order them

to seize upon your produce. No man in his senses therefore, will go to France even if there were no obstruction on the sea, without insurance against seizure ; and I am informed no such insurance can be obtained : this will probably soon be the case in all the counties under her controul. But what certainty have we, that we can export our produce to any country unmolested by the numerous pirates now upon the seas ? Do we find this security in the plunders of Victor Hugues ; in his declaration, that all Americans are damned rascals, meaning that it is a sufficient cause of condemnation that a vessel is American, in his definition of contraband, or in his orders to put to death all Americans who shall resist his corsairs ; or do we find it in the dispatches, and particularly in that part of them which discloses threats not merely of robbing us at sea but of ravaging our coasts, or where they talk of “suspending hostilities” provided we will give up all they have taken, and encrease our grants in proportion to their future depredations, under a pretext of a loan ? * No my fellow citizens, you will fully appreciate the attempts, the wicked attempts, which have been made to raise a clamour against your government, by asserting it was going to war, for the carriage of British manufactures, and on a point of diplomatic etiquette. It is not this decree alone, of which we complain, but the whole course of French conduct to this country evin-

* *Savannah, April 10th.*—On Friday the 6th instant, arrived at this port the *Cornelia*, Capt. Simms, in ten days from Grenada. Before Capt. Simms left Grenada a French corvette of 20 guns was captured and carried into Martinique, on board of which were commissions for capturing all American vessels without distinction.—A French schooner was also captured, on board which there were commissions of a similar nature. The above information appeared in the Grenada, Martinique, and St. Vincent's news-papers.

French Gazettes contain an account to this effect : That Tallien had proposed in the council of Five Hundred that permission be granted to all privateers on a cruise, to oblige neutral vessels, notwithstanding the validity of their papers, to unload their cargoes at any port at the option of the cruisers.

es a determination to plunder you wherever she
 can find your property, and her depredations are con-
 fined to the seas merely because she has not the means
 at present of bringing her robberies into the heart of
 your country. For my own part I feel an indiffer-
 ence as to the nature of their decrees, for of what
 consequence is it what is their law when the wicked,
 abandoned and profligate Judge, who is to pronounce
 the law, is a sharer in our spoils? With him, and in
 such a country, the only question will be, what is the
 value of the cargo? We all know that Merlin, and
 probably others of the Directory and their vice-ge-
 nerals in the West Indies, are concerned in the pri-
 vateers. All men of candor will therefore admit
 that the various decrees and profligate conduct of the
 French government amount to an annihilation of
 our commerce, and that the only question which re-
 mains to be decided is, whether we will abandon the
 ocean because France will plunder us and make war
 upon us if we do not, or whether we will arm in our
 defence, and carry our productions not to France, to
 Holland or to Spain, but to some neighbouring neu-
 tral country, from which it will unavoidably find its
 way into these countries. Either we must do this or
 we must let the British become our only carriers; and
 this is recommended by some: and by whom is it
 recommended? By those very gentlemen who have
 been the most alive to former commercial violations.
 By those gentlemen who, rather than submit to a par-
 tial violation of their commerce, were willing to
 hazard those very calamities, of which they preach
 so much by day and contemplate by night, the
 calamities of war. Those gentlemen who objected
 to the commercial arrangement of the British treaty
 because it suffered England to do what she before had
 a right to do; to lay light money and counter-vail-
 ing duties, because she did not agree to admit us into
 her ports in the West Indies, which she never did do

before the war, but by proclamations, when it suited her, because they conjectured a little disadvantage in the regulations, relative to the fur trade and the East India trade ; all these things which we never had possessed, they were willing to run the risk of fighting for, by rejecting the treaty, after compensation for spoliations was stipulated. But they are now willing not only to abandon all former losses, not only to submit to the imposition of counter-vailing duties or partial losses upon our commerce, but to abandon it altogether, and give it up Britain, to whom they so much grudged what might be called at most trivial and equivocal advantages.* But France imposes the necessity in this case, and this accounts for the dissimilarity of conduct. If Britain had commanded us to give to her all our commerce, we should have heard but little about the calamities of war, and much about national honor. If I had proposed it, I should have been a receiver of British gold. But France demands it, and exclusive patriotism yields to the requisition. This is an incomplete catalogue of that commercial warfare, which has not as yet amounted to an adequate chastisement for our national ingratitude, and the measure of which I fear is never to be full. All these enormities committed in open violation of treaty, the laws of nations and duties of national faith, have been borne with a patience unparalleled in the annals of national philosophy. For what have we done, issued letters of mark and reprisal ? No. Declared war ? No. We only talk about defending ourselves when attacked, and this is considered as evidence of a long and fixed determination to go to war with France. And what is it that induces us to talk thus ? Mr. Pinckney, a Minister of the first talents and respectability, and a

* I owe it to my own feelings and to the character of these gentlemen, to except from the above imputation, the representatives of Baltimore and Norfolk. These gentlemen have manifested a determination to postpone all other considerations to the defence of their country's rights.

warm admirer of the French revolution, whilst it was considered the cause of governmental reform and of rational freedom, has not only been rejected with ignominy and contempt, but threatened to be arrested if he continued in France and denied a passport to carry him away. But she said she was determined never to receive another American Minister until after a redress of the grievances, demanded of the American government. These grievances are to be seen, by adverting to Mr. Adet's note to Mr. Pickering in November 1796, which he published in order to coerce the government, through the people into an abandonment of its independence. We were called upon to revoke all those legislative, executive and judicial acts, which had been opposed by her Ministers, sometimes openly resisted and many of which were finally recognized by France, in the recall of Genet, and all of which had been adopted upon the most mature deliberation, and most of them after a regular discussion. This was the condition upon which she intended to receive a Minister; that is, when we should consent to abandon our Independence and do whatever she commanded us; and this is the principle upon which most people saw she rejected Mr. Pinckney. But although France wanted no such apology (for she had a much better one, I mean her recent victories in Italy) yet her advocates here said she rejected him because he was not a Minister Extraordinary, for as much as we had sent a Minister of that description, in a similar case, to England. Most people knew the reason why we sent a Minister of that kind to England, was because our Minister in London had been some years absent from his country, and could not be supposed to be fully impressed with those sentiments of indignation which were universally exhibited against British depredations, and could not for that reason be so well calculated in the language of our then President, to vin-

dicate our rights with firmness, and cultivate peace with sincerity : but as Mr. Pinckney was going immediately from his country to succeed Mr. Monroe all that was necessary was to invest him with sufficient powers. Few men believed he was rejected on that ground, and fewer still believed in the sincerity of those who pretended to believe it. But as this extraordinary dismissal was excused on this supposed nicety of attention, in France, to diplomatic etiquette and as it could do no harm, and might possibly produce good, we determined that obstacles of that kind should no longer exist, and we therefore sent off three Ministers instead of one ; and we not only gave them, if not the power of selling their country, at least as ample powers of concession, as ever we can make, whilst we mean to retain our Independence ; but we called them likewise ministers extraordinary. Let us see how much of the apology for Mr. Pinckney's dismissal was built upon the circumstance of his not having extraordinary powers, or rather supposed not to have, for whether he had such, was a matter of conjecture. These are the words of a very influential member of the opposition in the House of Representatives : " I will take it upon myself to assert that he (Mr. Pinckney) had not extraordinary powers, because if he had, the President would either have told us so, or furnished us with a copy of them : And above all, had he had such extraordinary powers there would have been no other alternative for us between submission and war." We all know now that, whatever might have been the case of Mr. Pinckney, no difficulty exists of that kind at present—But why suppose Mr. Pinckney had not these powers ? We know the same unfounded jealousy existed with regard to the powers of our present commissioners and we now know they were unwarrantable--the supposition is contrary to that long established maxim, that we ought always

to presume rectitude until the contrary appears—Yes, we know our commissioners were ministers extraordinary, and that their powers were commensurate with the object of their mission—that their instructions breathed the most pacific spirit; we know they have been treated with the most sovereign contempt; we know the object of France is plunder, and that as long as she can attain that object, she will not come to a reconciliation—We see her fixed determination to extort money as long as we determine to submit—we see her threatening to partition us like Venice, and when we refuse to comply with the abominable demands which, those who make them, acknowledge unjust, we are told if we do not comply and if in consequence of such non-compliance our ministers should not be received, that by means of her *diplomatic* skill and her party here, she can throw all the blame on the federal party. And does the gentleman who formerly declared, that if Mr. Pinckney had had extraordinary powers, there would have been no other alternative for us between submission and war; Does he now adhere to this declaration? No. He would go further were he to say so, than any person contemplates. But he acknowledges that she is guilty of the most abominable and atrocious acts, that she demands payment of money for having plundered our property and he would not grant it because it would be submission, but it is not submission to suffer Victor Hugues's gun-boats to capture without any pretext, than because we are “*damned rascals” vessels and cargoes of immense value and to an immense loss to the revenues.

I confess that this distinction is somewhat meta-

* Capt. Stetebury, of the sloop Sally of Philadelphia, bound to St. Thomas, was taken and carried into St. Martin, he applied to Victor Hugues for permission to throw his papers, which were complete for a vessel sailing to a neutral port, and that he was bound from St. Thomas to France; Hugues answered, “all Americans were damned rascals and that his cargo and all that fell in his hands of Americans would share the same fate.”

physical and rather beyond my powers of discrimination—but add to the rejection of Mr. Pinckney, (which must now be known to have proceeded from the magisterial haughtiness of the directorial divan,) their treatment to our envoys and the decree issued against our commerce whilst they were soliciting an audience, and I think this gentleman might at least have said he would be willing we should defend ourselves against future attacks.—But what do a high spirited and independent people, who have liberally expended their blood and their money for the happy government we enjoy, what do they talk of? They say nothing about compensation for former injuries, but have expressly instructed through their executive, their envoys to abandon all ideas of compensation for former losses, provided we can be secure against future aggression. We say, “Frenchmen, we love peace and have cultivated it to the best of our knowledge, and in order to maintain it with you, we have suffered long and many injuries and we have constantly hoped that a returning sense of justice would before this, have produced a cessation of these sufferings; but we find the more we are disposed to bear, the greater burthens are you disposed to inflict.—We tell you there is an ultimate point of injury and degradation beyond which we will never pass—we have come up to that point, and therefore we tell you to let us alone in the enjoyments of those rights which all the world and yourselves acknowledge to be our rights, for we are determined to defend them. We have the same right to the ocean which is common to all, and we want no other right but that of exporting the productions of our soil to other nations and of obtaining in return those manufactures, conveniences or delicacies which may contribute to our lawful gratification.—We will attempt no trade relative to the legality of which there exists any doubt, and if

you wish to enquire if we have on board any unlawful goods, come and search as the laws and rights of nations direct by sending your boats on board with two or three hands whilst your vessels of war lie beyond the reach of cannon shot ; but if instead of this, your search is a broadside, and your entry on board our vessels, commenced by beating and maiming our officers and crews and plundering us of our property, before even an inspection of our papers, then you shall not search at all—But is to plunder us of our property and thumb screw* our sailors, to manifest a zeal in defence of the rights of man ? If so it were far better that he had no rights—We deem the right of defence of our persons and property against lawless aggression one of the most unquestionable rights of men, rights written in capitals in the great book of nature, and we should not deserve the name of men to suffer them to be wrested from us by the russian hand of unprincipled violence whilst we grasp in our hands the instruments of defence.

This is what we say to France, and what I shall always believe we ought to say to all the world. And does it lie in the mouths of those who constantly speak in such high terms of admiration of the whigs, and so contemptibly of the tories of '76, to brand with the epithet of tory all who talk thus, and only thus ? Did not the whigs last war say that they would rather expend their blood and their millions of money, than pay three pence per pound upon tea ? Yes, for it was not the sum, it was the principle rather than yield to which, they were ready to lay down their lives and their fortunes. If, said they, England can lay three pence per pound upon tea, without our consent, she may levy to the whole extent of our proper-

* In one instance, one of our captains was thumb-screwed to compel him to search falsely, that his vessel was bound to a British port.

ty, and therefore, as submission to one invasion of our rights, will only provoke another, and we shall have to repel it at last ; it is best to meet it at the threshold. Had they have said we will count the money which it will cost us to resist this invasion, and balanced it against the three pence upon tea, we should have, at this moment, been colonies of Britain : for if France compels us to abandon our commercial rights, she may call upon us to abandon every other right. It is in vain we attempt to distinguish between our commercial and any other rights ; to invade the rights of commerce is not merely to invade the rights of individuals, but to invade one of the most important rights of the nation and attribute of national sovereignty. It is the duty of every good government to protect its citizens in their lawful pursuits ; when a government ceases to do this, it ceases to accomplish the primary object of the political association, and the citizen then puts on the man and executes for himself the first injunction of nature, self-preservation. If, when commerce is invaded, the agriculturist or mechanic sit down, and count their money, and say it will cost the nation more to defend this class of men than their invaded property is worth, and we will therefore abandon them to their fate, the same argument will recur when the rights of the mechanic or the agriculturist are invaded. But to invade the rights of commerce is to invade the rights of all ; for all must stand or fall together. Already have we lost between fifteen and twenty million of dollars, to which may be added the interest upon this loss, the loss of this much active capital, and a loss perhaps equal to both the foregoing, arising from the suspension of mercantile business and decay of shipping lying idle in their harbours. If, after all this, we are willing because we have thus been plundered to give up all our trade, it is to me truly alarming. When I see those who have hereto-

fore expressed so much solicitude for the welfare of the American commerce, now ready to abandon the ocean, it seems to me from the rapidity of the progress of national humiliation, every right, is in danger: to have been heard to say two years ago we would abandon our commerce, because any nation told us we must do it, would have been thought to have made the declaration of a madman. Is it because we have been habituated to degradation by repeated aggression, that we are thus philosophically inclined? If such be the rapid progress of the public sentiment, what security have we if our territory is invaded. If Georgia should be invaded through the Floridas and France should inform us, she only wanted some atlantic ports on the American continent, and if we would give her Georgia, she would proceed no further, that same spirit which says, count your money and suffer not your citizens to defend their rights when invaded by pirates, lest it may involve war, will tell you to defend Georgia, will cause you to pay more than she is worth; you had therefore better abandon her. When, then, we have submitted to aggression after aggression; when our repeated advances for reconciliation have been met with disdain, when France says we know your claims are just, but we consult power only, and determine not what we may justly do, but to do what our physical power is adequate to, and instead of making compensation for our just demands, declares we must pay her all the money we can raise, and in the mean time issues a new decree to let loose upon our commerce her corsairs, to destroy what remains, when hundreds of our citizens have been stripped of every farthing in a country where the necessaries of life are extravagantly high, I mean the West-Indies, and reduced to the very point of starvation, and when between forty and fifty thousand of our seamen must abandon their country, or be permitted to be armed in their defence, when all

these things have happened, we have arrived at the ultimate point of national forbearance; and when we say, and only say we will defend ourselves against future aggression, I may fairly conclude we have borne our sufferings with a patience unparralleled in the annals of national philosophy. But I have said our government could not, by any means short of the abandonment of its Independence and right of judging for itself of the measures necessary for our happiness and security, have avoided the embarrassments which we now experience. To attempt a refutation of all the calumnies and nonsensical accusations against the government, of our country, relative to our disputes with France, would be as little entertaining as unprofitable. I will however, annalize some of the profound arguments, by which all our embarrassments are attributed to ourselves.

We made a treaty in November 1794, with Britain, by which we violated the rights of France, and therefore she was justified in violating her treaty with us in May 1793, in abusing, during the greater part of '93 and 94, insulting and imprisoning our citizens, in seizing our vessels on the sea; and forcibly taking our provisions in her ports without paying for them, and imposing other burthens and impositions which, according to Messrs. Monroe and Skipwith, would unless checked very speedily, compel us to relinquish all commercial intercourse with her. We sent Mr. Jay to England to demand compensation for their depredations upon our commerce, and to adjust certain political disputes, which were hastening to a crisis, and our patriots said he was a friend to England, and therefore because he was sent, not because he made a treaty, says Mr. Monroe France was alienated on his arrival there—This treaty since made is objected to, because it is said to contain grants to Britain, which are denied to France; but it is discovered that France is en-

titled to the privileges of the most favored nation and she determines to modify her treaty according to her own construction, takes all the advantageous articles of the British treaty, keeps all such in her own, breaks it when she pleases and makes it when and how she pleases, and therefore she still may plunder us because we made a British treaty.—Say our political Solomons, the British treaty is the source of all our misfortunes, but Denmark and Sweden have been extolled for making no such treaty and therefore they are constantly involved in the same decrees.—France issued a decree in '93 upon the principle that by the law of nations, free ships do not make free goods; when being informed by our minister that our treaty with her had changed the general law in this respect, she revokes it as to us and continues it in force against those neutrals with whom she had made no such stipulations, thereby acknowledging the law of nations to be as above, and because we (after her own example and after consulting the best writers on the law of nations and knowing the doctrine to have been sanctioned by the wisest nations) acknowledge this to be the law in the British treaty.—France may now say with propriety it is not the law.—France has promised liberty and equality to the Belgians and the Dutch, if they would abolish their ancient institutions and receive them into their country as guardians and protectors against their former tyrants, and as soon as they have entered these countries and gotten these ill-fated people completely in their power, they have violated all their engagements, exercised a constant military tyranny, extorted contributions in money and in kind until nothing remains to be contributed, and as a compensation for all these things, they are now to be called Batavians and Belgians instead of Netherlanders (and by the by they now deserve the name of Netherlanders more than ever) and are permitted

to speak the words liberty and equality as often as the French direct them.—She has made a friendly war upon Venice, such an one as she is now making upon Switzerland, and has talked to them about liberty and equality until she excited her patriots to overturn their government and has promised them her protection; and has given them up as vassals to the house of Austria, whom above all other nations they the most detested. She has extorted from Portugal as long as any thing could be obtained, and then imprisons her minister and is about to try him because he could no longer yield to her attempts to bribe him, and is preparing to plunder and ravage his country.—She has raised an insurrection in Rome in order that she might extend her fraternity to the Roman patriots, one of her officers got killed in the attempt to suppress the insurrection,* she determines to inflict old Roman vengeance on modern Rome, and instead of demanding satisfaction from the nation by demanding the punishment of the individuals concerned, she reserves her vengeance for the nation† and plants the tree of liberty in the capital§ of the pope. She marches into the territory of the

* There can be but little doubt, since this insurrection commenced in the vicinity of a French minister's house, and from the insurgents calling on him for aid, but it was concerted by him and the facility with which the revolution is accomplished confirms this idea.

† The Romans always denied the punishment of individuals, and made individual wrongs the pretext for conquering the nation—Vide Montefquieu's *Rise and Fall*, &c. chap. 6.

§ *Rome, Feb. 15.*—The moment the French entered this city, the general levied a contribution of four millions, in specie, two millions in provisions, and three thousand horses. The murderers of general Duphot have fled. The tree of liberty was planted before the capitol, the day on which the solemn mass is performed at the Vatican on the inauguration of the Pope.

Our Republic will consist of all the provinces guaranteed to the Pope by the treaty of Tolentino. His Holiness is guarded in his palace by 500 men, and seals are placed on his palaces as well as upon those of absent cardinals.

The French have demanded forty thousand bushels of grain and other provisions of the court of Naples. The number of French troops in this place amounts to 12,000.

Swiss, violates her ancient rights and institutions, displaces her civil officers, openly countenances an insurrection † and threatens and actually makes war upon the government of Berne for attempting to suppress it—Like a huge serpent, she leaves a tract behind her wherever she passes, and this tract is wretchedness, anarchical tyranny, prostration of all the rights of property, the elevation of the wicked upon the ruin of the virtuous—At home the Directory openly invades the constitution passes laws to regulate privateering (in which some of its members are to partake) marches an army into Paris, seizes all the members of the legislature who have firmness and virtue enough to resist their unprincipled designs, proscribes them without trial and sends them to the land of reptiles—suppresses all the presses, and consigns to destruction every influential agent in the late elections—seizes in the hands of her own citizens, all British manufactures after they have been paid for and some of them captured and sold by her privateers, and for which they had received themselves a part of the money—All these things she has done and is now doing to other nations and to her own citizens, and therefore it cannot be supposed she could once have contemplated wrong against us, had we not provoked her. Our own government prompted by the benevolent design of maintaining peace with all the world is so respectful to the rights

† This is the address of citizen Mengaud, French envoy to the government of Berne: "High and mighty lords, the brotherly treatment I have received during my stay at Arau instills into me a very animated interest in its fate. I learn from the sentiments of liberty uttered by you, that movements of troops have been made, but I cannot, high and mighty lords, be indifferent to these political arrangements; and I declare that as soon as your armed force shall move towards Arau, or the inhabitants thereof be in anywise molested, for uttering sentiments different from yours, the French troops from all quarters shall, and by the shortest routes, march against the city of Berne and the magistracy alone shall be answerable for the arbitrary proceedings which it shall adopt as well as for its fraud and ridiculous tyranny."

• Vide also similar addresses to the people of Switzerland, and another address to the State of Berne, published in the newspapers about the 24th of April.

of others that she forbears to arm in her own defence whilst she can forbear, least she should offend against the rights of others—Our rights of person and of property are better secured than in any other government, our legislature pure and generally wise, the administration of justice unexceptionable and all our interior arrangements such as command the admiration of the world except of those revilers of its measures, who hate justice because she pulls down the wicked and exalts the good. Yet we have never been right and France never wrong. Those gentlemen who are the most distinguished for their opposition to almost all the past measures of the government, have confessed they possess under it all the happiness they desire, thus directly contradicting all their former predictions and present clamourings; yet they still persist in enforcing the sentiment that our government has never done right in regard to France and France has only done wrong because we commenced it; yes since the great mass of light which has burst forth from the dispatches and instructions, these men persist in their blind and incurable obstinacy and declare upon the floor of Congress, that we are now repaying the price of retribution for the injuries we have done her.* They will not say France is justifiable in her infamous demands and yet they say the same thing, when they impute all these demands to the previous provocation on our part. It remains for you to analyze this heterogeneous compound; to separate the alkali from the acid, and I doubt not the late dispatches will render it an easy process.

You will readily agree with me that a government so flagitious, so abandoned and so ambitious, is not to be diverted from her designs by submission; nor will you believe that any trivial concessions on our part would have averted the terrible scourges which she has prepared for nations. I have but little doubt

* Vide debates on Convoys.

she aspires to the dominion of the world, and she seems to be treading in the footsteps of a nation who once attained it ; I will take the liberty of extracting the substance of some parts of the 6th chapter of Montesquieu's Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire, in which he points out the means by which Rome attained to universal empire, and compare them with some traits in the politics of France, by which it will be seen Rome is her model :—" If" says he " they were engaged in war with several enemies at the same time, they granted a truce to the weakest, who thought themselves happy in obtaining it ; considering it as a great advantage that their ruin had been suspended." France has in the same manner exercised an unwearied endeavor by bribing one power with the spoils of another to detach it from the coalition and has ultimately succeeded in reducing the confederacy to a single enemy—" If at any time the people of a foreign nation sent individual offenders to them they refused to punish them, choosing rather to consider the whole nation as guilty and reserve to themselves a useful vengeance." France has made war upon the Romans, subverted their government, and no doubt will add their country to the number of her satellite Republics ; all this has been done too for the acts of individuals, without waiting for their punishment by the government—she made the murder of some of her soldiers in like manner the pretext for invading and partitioning Venice, and some conduct of individuals the pretence for attacking and revolutionizing the Pays de Vaud, and thus is Switzerland the pride and boast of republics for so many ages, about to be melted down into the mass of her mighty power. When she shall get into Spain by virtue of the grant lately given, to march 70,000 troops through her dominions to Portugal, she will only have to excite some of her soldiers to acts of insolence, which will provoke

some Spanish peasants, to commit an outrage upon them, and we shall soon be informed that a few sprouts of her prolific tree of liberty are planted in Madrid.

“ Whenever they granted peace they compelled their former enemy to join them.” This France has constantly done wherever she has had the power to compel it.

“ Whenever a people threw off their allegiance to their sovereign, they became their ally.” France here has even surpassed her model, for she has invited the people every where to throw off their allegiance, has issued a decree by which she directs her generals to give protection to rebels, and in order to give this order greater publicity, she has ordered it to be published in all languages—Holland and Belgium and Italy if not Switzerland have partaken of her paternal protection.

“ In becoming her ally they were safe against all the world but became Roman vassals.” Let us behold the late proceedings in Holland, let us see the constitutions formed by the Dutch convention laid aside at the command of France, and let us behold the French faction re-acting the fourth of September and imprisoning those deputies who were against the consolidation of the states, behold the French minister congratulating in a public address, these creatures of his will, see him occupying the palace of the stadtholder and giving law to this fallen and degraded country, and we may then see how far they have adhered to their model in this particular.

These allies were indebted to them for their new government and this constituted a constant obligation.” By this we may understand something of the extent of the doctrine of gratitude which we have heard so much about for these few years past—“ Whenever they admitted any cities to freedom they divided them into factions and ruled them by

their own divisions." This is not only the method which France takes to rule after she has conquered, but her method of conquering—"It was their maxim to grant assistance to all who came to implore it"—France has not waited for others to ask, she has constantly obtruded her favours upon others, unsolicited—We remember how frequently she has encouraged us to take vigorous measures of re-action against England and if we were not able to revenge ourselves upon her, France was ready to aid us—But wisely have we avoided her aid ; it would have proved more deleterious to America, than the yellow fever has to Philadelphia—"When they conquered, they pretended to conquer for the benefit of others" We have had ample proof of the solitudes of France, for rescuing nations from the yoke of their former tyrants—"They always imposed contributions when they made peace in order by imposing taxes to weaken the affections of the people"—To weaken the affections of the people for their government in every country is the object of her constant hopes. These are the means by which Rome gave the law to nations, and these are the means by which France has already laid prostrate, not the monarchies against whom she declared vengeance, but the republics for which she has professed so much friendship; and these are the means by which she is still progressing to the empire of nations—It will be asked, do we expect to check her progress ? I answer, as far as regards ourselves, we may possibly check it, provided we cease to impeach our own government with a neglect of the means of conciliating this proud republic ; provided, we unite in one opinion as to her designs and in one sentiment to repel her attempts. It is vain to imagine little concessions, and submission after submission will avert the fate which she designs, or that any thing our government could have done would have exempted us from that scourge

which she is every where inflicting.—We know the character of Frenchmen under Lewis the 14th, we know how repeatedly and unprovokedly he invaded the Dutch, the various arts and manœuvres* he used to lull the silly monarch of England into an acquiescence to his scheme of conquering Europe—We know his repeated attempts to raise the Duke of Bavaria to the imperial throne that by this creature of his will, he might break the power of Germany and give law to Europe. All these projects and many more, French writers and particularly the Abbe Mably, confessed were founded in a determination to assume the empire of the world; but it was said when the monarchy tumbled, the only ambition of Frenchmen would be to make man happy:—The millennium was to commence, the chains of mankind were to be broken in pieces, and peace, the natural state of man was never to be forsaken—She, like Hercules to be sure was to become a monster-killer and exterminate monarchy from the face of the earth, but her chivalrous feats were only to be directed against monarchs—How far she has fulfilled her promises let the republics of Holland, of Geneva, of Venice, of Genoa, and Switzerland and America bear witness. My fellow citizens, France is still France and that same spirit which under the monarchy actuated the citizen to lose sight of himself and his individual happiness in contemplating the splendor of the grand monarch, which induced him to submit with pleasure to individual wretchedness for the extension of his country's fame, is now flourishing in greater vigor under the extended limits of the Republic—Everywhere is she extending her own dominion under the pretence of establishing republics independent and free, but how free they are you will see by Buonaparte's

* Lewis sent to Charles as one method of making him pacific, the accomplished Madam Querouaille; and Barras and Co. have tried a similar expedient with our commissioners.

answer to the deputation of the city of Milan who came to him to complain about some of the articles of the treaty with the emperor—says he, “Not more the enemy of royalists than disorganizers; I am about setting out for France; I leave you the liberty of your republic with twenty-five thousand men to defend it, I will compose for you a legislative body of wise and honest men. It is yours to enjoy the benefits of a revolution which has not cost you a single drop of blood; if you abuse it I will return with the rapidity of an eagle to reduce and punish you. In the meantime remember you are a conquered people; I am here the legislative (the executive too it seems) power, and your heads shall drop at the least trouble or disorder of which you shall be the authors.” This is the way she gives freedom to nations and this is the way she intends to give freedom to us and rescue us from the tyranny of the Anglo faction of which we have heard so much. To reduce us to the state of the Milanese or Cisalpine republics and to let Buonaparte make constitutions and compel us to adopt them with a detachment of troops in our convention is her object, and our refusal to suffer all this is the grievance of which she complains, until which is suffered, she will not receive our ministers, nor cease her depredations. I believe then you will agree with me that it was not in the power of our government to have averted the misfortunes which this nation is determined to inflict upon mankind*—Let us now enquire into the

* Her conduct to the quondam Geneva is a singular instance of her total disregard of neutral rights.—In 1792, she resolved to attack Savoy, and gave orders to this effect, to General Monceignon, that as the possession of Geneva was essential to the security of Savoy; he was to enter it, by force, if necessary, and take 10,000 muskets, which were in it, and of which the French republic was in need, and the letter of the Minister at War (Servan) concludes thus—if you are told these muskets are necessary to the security of the town (Geneva) you may remove their apprehensions by leaving them 4 or 5000 men to take care of them. “You may thus convert Geneva into a barrier of the republic.”—They did enter Geneva and took possession of the town; not because they had any quarrel with them, but because it enabled them to attack, to advantage, Savoy, this manifest

origin and nature of those calumnies which have attempted such inroads upon the reputation of your government and threatened its existence.

If your government were as bad as has been represented, I would not hesitate to declare it ought to be demolished—But it must be the consolation of every American, that the happiness, internal tranquility and contentment of our citizens gives the lie direct to the infamous slanderers of its purity, and that it only requires a knowledge of its measures to receive the approbation of its constituents—But whence arise all these infamous falsehoods which assail us in many directions? They in a great measure originate from those vile scoundrels who get their daily bread by slander and who fear nor hate nothing so much as virtue—who are constantly preaching about the liberty of the press and constantly practising the most certain means of its destruction; who tell us of the excellency of the trial by jury and of the liberty of the press, and yet constantly speak in terms of the highest admiration of a country and its government, where the trial of its citizens is preceded by their execution and where every printer in the nation has been ostracised, who did not precisely step to the tune of the directorial mandates—who are always talking about the blessings of peace and the calamities of war and adoring the nation which makes war a trade—who are always clamouring about executive encroachments, and palliate and excuse the acts of a government whose executive is a horde of plunderers, equally of the rights of the legislature, its citizens and

all regard of the rights of neutrals, which she commenced in '92, has run through all her subsequent acts, and this same spirit, it is which, in order to plunder England, prompted her to plunder our commerce, which she now continues to rob from a spirit of wanton rapacity—and yet after such conduct to every nation within her reach, some are so weak or designing as to ascribe all her violations of our commerce to the British Treaty. For the above account of their conduct at Geneva, see D'Ivernois's account of the revolution at Geneva.

the world. These abandoned miscreants many of whom have recently fled from the just vengeance of offended justice, pretend to a monopoly of political information and dogmatically denounce every act of your government.—They hate laws, but as they know laws whilst existing only in the statute book are innocent things, they hate the executors of the laws worse than the laws themselves—Hence their constant attempts to undermine executive authority—Hence every act of the wise and virtuous Washington was both wicked and foolish—His proclamation of neutrality, intended merely as a paternal and friendly monitor to such of his fellow citizens as might be supposed ignorant of the duties and rights of their neutral situation, lest they should offend against existing laws, and incur punishments of which they were ignorant, was assailed with the most virulent invectives because he did not chuse to give up the sovereignty of his country to a foreign minister, and to be forced into a war which United America proclaimed her aversion to; he was calumniated and vilified for the coldness of his attachment to republicanism—Yes this venerable personage, whose fame has penetrated into every region of the world, and the knowledge of whose virtues is co-extensive with the knowledge of his name, who is equally the admiration of the civilized and savage man, and whose wisdom and patriotism every where shine like the light of Heaven upon the whole face of our country, and are every where reflected and characterised in its prosperity; he has been discovered to be a fool and a traitor, and the infamous letter of Thomas Paine, fit only to be burnt by the hang-man, has been circulated with an industry which it seems will never tire.*—How then could his successor expect to be exempted from those torrents of malignant false-

* This letter has been advertised for sale every day in the Aurora, I believe for at least a twelvemonth.

hoods which have been constantly poured forth against him? He did not expect, nor did any body expect it—Virtue and Vice can no more unite than oil and water, and he was likely to be assailed in proportion to his merits, to his independence of sentiment and love of country: for in proportion to his firmness in these respects, was he an unfit instrument for enforcing the designs of the Devotees of France. Accordingly every slander for which there was the least plausibility, was industriously propagated in order to prevent his election; and as it was well known there existed in this country an excessive jealousy of monarchical and hereditary power, he was represented as the friend of monarchy and hereditary honors.—As soon, however, as these attempts had been found to have failed in effecting their objects, the party, forgetting that independence of mind which had so eminently characterized him in the American councils and in European cabinets, vainly imagined they might accomplish by flattery, what they could not effect by abuse. Accordingly, immediately after his qualification as president, those presses which had before vomited forth more slanders, than did Vesuvius or Etna ever emit of Cinders and of Lava, began to celebrate him to the skies, as a firm, virtuous and stern republican, and the inimitable supporter of the Rights of Man—They were soon convinced, however, that this shallow artifice had failed, for this was not a period to temporize or to manifest a timid and wavering conduct. In his speech, therefore, to Congress, at their extraordinary session, he came forth and boldly announced to the world the principles upon which his administration would be guided thereby, declaring he never meant to deviate from that system of measures which his predecessor had so deliberately and uprightly established. The basis upon which so much of the hopes of this party had been erected, viz. a change in the

system of Washington's administration, now tumbled into ruins and their prospects with it—And this it was which I conceive to be the great cause of that chagrin & irritation which was manifested in every countenance—Because he spoke in manly though decent terms of the unprecedented treatment of our minister, because he supposed from the speech of Barras, (what we now have incontestably evinced) that France contemplated the plan of dividing the people from the government in order to rule us by our own divisions, and to prepare us for her fraternal embraces as she is now preparing Switzerland; his speech was called a war whoop, and from thenceforth he became the object of abuse, for which, if applied to the directors, were the authors of it in their favorite republic they would soon be dispatched to Cayenne—Hence forward the sincerity of his wishes for peace with France have not only been suspected, but he has been traduced as her rancorous enemy and the servile minion of Pitt and Britain—All this too took place after he had announced to the public his sincere desire for peace with France in his speech to Congress, after he had nominated our envoys, and in his reply to the answer of the House of Representatives had again assured us of it; yet he was disbelieved and his instructions from that moment to the period of their disclosure were presumed to be illiberal and inimical to France—Because in his speech at the present session of Congress he declared that such was the relaxation of morals and to weak the operation of the social principle that we were not to expect an exemption from the depredations of European nations, without providing for ourselves the means of protection, this general declaration made to the other branches of our own government and which other nations have nothing to do with, was called a declaration of war against France—and this was his second declaration of war—no

sooner were our envoys nominated, than, because they were men of well known abilities and integrity and therefore not likely to become either the dupes or the tools of France, they were represented as men of monarchical attachments, enemies of France and friends of her enemies—Thus did this party take the means of marring the mission at the outset, and might possibly have contributed to its failure; as soon, however, as it was understood our Envoys were not received, forasmuch as the blame must be attributed to our administration, it was conjectured until it was taken for granted, that their instructions were unfriendly and too limited to procure peace with the French republic, on terms that were reasonable or just—The president was represented as having been in conspiracy with Pichegru for the subversion of the republic and the restoration of monarchy. The most infamous falsehoods have been circulated to impress upon the public mind, that the president was attentive to nothing more than to making the fortunes of himself and his family—He has been represented as having received, together with his son, eighty thousand dollars in one year—Independently of the infamous falsehood, it is enough to be observed that, that he receives no more than has been fixed for his predecessor, by an act of Congress, and that his son receives the same as every other minister of the same grade—But since so many falsehoods have been circulated relative to his son's appointments, it may not be improper to state the circumstances pertaining to them. Mr. Adams, son of the president, was nominated by General Washington, and the nomination approved by the senate, as minister resident of the Hague—Having resided there some time, and given evidences of that attention to the interest of our country, and of those talents which distinguished the enlightened public functionary in the line of diplomacy, General Washington thought proper to no-

minate him to the court of Lisbon, and to raise his grade from that of a minister-resident to that of a minister plenipotentiary—This nomination was ratified by the senate—Accordingly, when Mr. Adams, came into the presidency, his son, stood as high as he could upon the list of foreign ministers, whether with regard to rank or salary—All that has been done since the presidency has devolved upon Mr. Adams, is merely to change the court for which he was destined. It has been repeatedly represented that Mr. Adams had received more out-fits than usual, and those must be astonished who see the following extract from the letter of a member of Congress* which seems to have been intended as a public letter. “The frequent change as well as the encreased rank of ministers is a desirable thing to them, for every change is entitled to a new out-fit—Young Adams has in this way had a new out-fit for every year since he was first appointed—one to Holland, one to Lisbon and another to Portugal,† and now eighteen thousand dollars to each, advanced for out-fit and first year’s salary”—Now Mr. Adams had when he went to the Hague an out-fit of 4,500 dollars, which is half of the out-fit for a minister plenipotentiary and when he was sent to Berlin and raised to the grade of a minister plenipotentiary he had again the half of an out-fit, viz. 4,500 dollars, which added to his former out-fit as minister resident makes 9,000 dollars, the sum which is allowed to all our ministers of that grade. It requires but little attention to see the difference of mine and this gentleman’s statement, nor much sagacity to discover the object of this glaring misrepresentation—But our constitution, rejects the idea of irresponsibility in the President and does not declare as in many other countries that

* See Mr. Findley’s letter, &c.

† I suppose he here meant Berlin, for Lisbon is the capital of Portugal.

the supreme executive magistrate can do no wrong and therefore the patriots of our country have established it as a maxim, that he never can do right. In order that they might disclose to the world the unparalleled vigilance with which they watch over the rights of their country in an unceasing attention to all the proceedings of its public agents they have issued forth the most violent philippics against his proclamation for fasting and humiliation—This is an extract from Bache's paper on the subject —“Most good men look on the President's late proclamation for fasting, humiliation and prayer, as one of those apparently humble, hypocritical and delusive methods by which tyrants, have universally began the foundation of oppressing the people with. Men in all ages have been oppressed by such pretenders to devotion—the book of life warns of such monsters in sheeps clothing and points them out as more dangerous than even a Sewall, an Otis or a Harper”—But what are we to expect from a set of profligate and abandoned atheists? Again in the same paper are these expressions—“America whether she will or no (for the French are to make her) is destined to occupy a superior station at no very distant period (when the French land here I suppose) in the sublunary drama, and truly it would be ludicrous to suppose, that the querulous and cankered murmurs, of blind, bald, crippled, toothless Adams, or the venal machinations of the executive tide waiters, cake catchers, meat mongers, bubble gulpers—the Sewalls Otis's and Harpers, can have any other effect, than afford additional and experimental proof of the folly of trusting such men with power.” These may be considered as the full grown flowers of democracy and of which there exist many more equally delectable to the olfactory nerves of our full bred patriots—*Flores tales in sereno vigent*—The dispatches so long anticipated

and languished after by every person interested in his country's happiness, at length arrived—instead of removing the solicitude of our country, which existed relative to our affairs with France, they give us an awful warning of the probably speedy explosion of the long gathering tempest—The President saw in them those evidences of an incurable corruption, which forbid us to calculate any longer on the enjoyment of peace and which seemed strongly to enforce upon Congress, the necessity of those measures of defence which he had before recommended—He also informed us that he no longer considered himself justifiable in continuing those instructions, which under a different aspect of affairs we had given to the officers of the customs, prohibiting the grant of clearances to such vessels as were armed, except in certain cases ; and left the subject to be taken up and either authorized, restricted or prohibited as Congress might think adviseable. In this he did what it was his duty to do—to continue these prohibitions contrary to his own sense of justice and right, and attach to himself all the responsibility of a measure which was considered as cruel and unwarrantable, by the mercantile part of the community, would have been folly in the extreme, and his duty to himself and to his country required that he should no longer delay, especially too as Congress were in session and could take a more extensive view and make more extensive arrangements than he could do—This message however was called a declaration of war and this is the third time he has declared war—But the President withheld the dispatches and instructions not from a fear of exposing as has been repeatedly suggested his enmity to France or France's friendship for us, because the instructions unequivocally evince the most ardent desire of peace with France and because the dispatches exhibit ample justification of his communication to congress and at

once dissipate all the vile calumnies against him—
 —As connected with this subject I feel an impulse which I cannot readily resist in this place, to give some of the outlines of congressional procedure at this important crisis and of which had it not been for the disclosure of executive purity and wisdom by the communication of the instructions and dispatches, evidences “strong as holy writ,” no man could have calculated the event—Whilst I lay open to public inspection the measures of my political opponents, I shall leave it to the world to assign the motives for their conduct—To attach to all those who differ from me in political principles the epithet of dishonest, is inconsistent with that liberality of which, amidst the collisions of party disputes, I hope never to be divested—on the contrary to say all such are upright in their intentions, would be to say more than I believe ever can be said of the same number of men engaged in one pursuit—whatever may be the motives, the effects of certain measures lately pursued have in my humble opinion been calculated to strike at the roots of our government and to induce revolution within and to invite aggression from without—That France has been encouraged in her system of aggression and haughtiness of her demands, by the systematic opposition which has been unceasingly evinced to almost all the measures of administration is to me no longer a matter of doubt. For proof of this opinion we need only attend to the following documents—Let us see first what Mr. Pinckney has said upon this subject, and whose authority I highly estimate—Speaking in his communications to our government, he says, “Those who consider us as being of some consequence, seem to have taken up an idea that our government acts upon principles opposed to the real sentiments of a large majority of the people, and they are willing to temporize until the event of the election of the Pre-

sident is known, thinking that if one public character is chosen, he will be attached to the interest of Britain, and that if another character is elected he will be (to use the expression of Dupont de Nemours in the council of Ancients) devoted to the interests of France." Let us attend to some part of the late dispatches and we shall see the same idea enlarged upon by M. Y. in his conversation with our ministers—"Perhaps," said he, "you believe that in returning and exposing to your countrymen the unreasonableness of the demands of this government, you will unite them in their resistance to these demands; you are mistaken: You ought to know the diplomatic skill of France, and the means she possesses in your country, are sufficient to enable her, with the French party in America to throw the blame which will attend the rupture of the negotiation, on the federalists as you term yourselves, but on the British party as France terms you." I might cite many other instances to this effect, but perhaps the most conclusive testimony of the means by which France expects to enchain all nations, that is by internal divisions and that all her prospects wherever she turns her attention are founded on this plan, exists in the address of the directory to the army of England—"At the height," say they, "at which the French are, their will is victory, therefore let the army of England go and dictate peace in London: and there also republicans, you will find auxiliaries, and there also you will find many men, whom reason has not sufficiently abandoned, to prevent them from being sensible of the odium, which their government spreads over the English name, and there also you will find thousands of those generous men who struggle this long time in order to obtain a parliamentary reformation"—Again in their proclamation to the people of France they say, "Frenchmen it is your ambition to overthrow the

dominion of the English cabinet, and it is by no means your intention to enslave the English people. After the unchecked success of the republican arms, that people will owe you the obligation of having rescued them from the weight of enormous taxes," &c. These are a few of an infinite number of instances from which it appears her plan is always to make war upon governments under pretext that it is for the happiness of the people and that she everywhere connects opposition to government with her cause—When she shall have alienated the affections of the people from their government and turned their heads with notions of liberty and equality, she has nothing to do but send a protecting army to rally the patriots or sans-culottes and to promise to erect upon the ruins of their existing government, the fabric of her own choice which she calls a republic, but which is found by experience to be more despotic than any absolute monarchy now known to exist. Having tried this expedient, and wherever she has tried it found it to succeed, she has very rationally concluded the same measures will have the same effect every where, and fancies she has ample materials in America for reducing us to the state of Holland or of Belgium—Having said this much of her views and her schemes, let us see how far some of the proceedings of our national legislature have been calculated to encourage her demands. If any persons should suppose that France is inattentive to the proceedings of congress, I request them to read Mr. Fauchet's pamphlet on American affairs and they will find he therein recommends it to the people of France to search for a justification of their country and the crimination of our administration in the measures we had adopted in regard to France, in the speech of a member of the House of Representatives from Virginia—At the time this speech was delivered, it was remarked by some gentlemen in reply to it, that it wore rather the com-

plexion of the speech of an advocate general of the French Republic, than of a member of the American legislature; for it abounded in an unqualified approbation of the measures of France and in the most violent philippics against the administration of Washington. Even her new doctrines about free ships making free goods, and her new law of contraband, were supported contrary to her own former example and contrary to the authority of Mr. Jefferson, an authority which that gentleman had always before been fond to quote. I do not cite this as an instance of corruption or sinister views, but state it as a fact which ought to have weight in developing the principles upon which the extravagance of her demands have been founded—But this was not the only speech which was delivered calculated to encourage her in her system. Many speeches were made in which all the outrages upon our country were merged in the mass of gratitude which Americans were said to owe to Frenchmen and calculated to impress upon France an opinion that no acts of injustice would ever cancel the obligation. The outrages of England for which compensation was already stipulated were repeatedly brought into view, and one gentleman left the ground of discussion and soared into the regions of poetry to inform the House about “the light of his paternal mansion,” which had been fired by the hands of Englishmen. Indeed there appeared a determination to justify France in every thing she had done, by criminating the administration for every thing it had already done and by a predetermination to induce a belief that it would do nothing in future which it ought to do. For although the President had expressed an ardent and sincere desire for peace with France, and had notified us of his intention to institute another attempt at negotiation, yet it was declared that he was hostile to France, and one gentleman went so far as to say, in the course of

debate, that he had no confidence in the executive, and he believed him to be hypocritical in his pretences for preserving peace—But the President, in order that no doubts might be entertained as to his sincerity made this reply to the answer of the House of Representatives, “I pray you, gentlemen, to believe and communicate to our constituents, that no event which I can see to be attainable, by any exertions of mine in the discharge of my duty, can afford me so much cordial satisfaction as to conduct a negotiation with the French Republic, to a removal of complaints, a correction of errors, a dissipation of prejudices, an accommodation of differences and a restoration of harmony and affection to the mutual satisfaction of both nations,” &c. Now whoever disbelieved the sincerity of the President after this declaration must have believed him to be a singular composition of hypocrisy indeed—And we do know that many did disbelieve him or affect to do it. Yes, as was the case with the regard to Mr. Pinckney’s instructions, we know the constant clamor has been that the instructions to our present envoys were not co-extensive with those liberal and equitable views which ought to be extended to France—But what must these gentlemen believe since the disclosure of the instructions? that they have circulated the most unfounded calumnies against the character of the President, for which every man of feeling ought to express the utmost contrition, and every man of candor is bound by his duties to his country, to its calumniated chief magistrate and to his own reputation, to be as explicit in his retraction as in his accusations—But I confess I have listened in vain to hear such retractions. In some instances and from some gentlemen, I have heard it said with a half smothered voice, that the present instructions were liberal enough, but I have heard no apology nor any sorrow expressed for such unfounded suspi-

cions as they have indulged. Every body recollects the bitter philippics issued forth against the executive, for having sent to congress the following message :—

Gentlemen of the Senate, and

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives.

THE dispatches, from the envoys extraordinary of the United States to the French Republic, which were mentioned in my message to both Houses of Congress, of the fifth instant, have been examined and maturely considered.

While I feel a satisfaction in informing you, that their exertions, for the adjustment of the differences, between the two nations, have been sincere and unremitted, it is incumbent on me, to declare, that I perceive no ground of expectation, that the objects of their mission, can be accomplished, on terms compatible with the safety, honor, or the essential interests of the nation.

This result, cannot with justice, be attributed, to any want of moderation on the part of this government, or to any indisposition to forego, secondary interests, for the preservation of peace. Knowing it to be my duty, and believing it to be your wish, as well as that of the great body of the people, to avoid by all reasonable concessions, any participation in the contentions of Europe, the powers vested in our envoys were commensurate with a liberal and pacific policy, and that high confidence which might justly be reposed in the abilities, patriotism and integrity of the characters to whom the negotiation was committed. After a careful review of the whole subject, with the aid of all the information I have received, I can discern nothing, which could have insured or contributed to success, that has been omitted on my part, and nothing further which can be attempted, consistently with maxims for which our country

has contended, at every hazard, and which constitute the basis of our National Sovereignty.

Under these circumstances, I cannot forbear to reiterate the recommendations which have been formerly made, and to exhort you to adopt with promptitude, decision and unanimity, such measures as the ample resources of the country afford, for the protection of our sea-faring and commercial citizens; for the defence of any exposed portions of our territory; for replenishing our arsenals, establishing foundries and military manufactures; and to provide such efficient revenue, as will be necessary to defray extraordinary expenses, and supply the deficiency which may be occasioned by depredations on our commerce.

The present state of things, is so essentially different, from that, in which instructions were given to collectors to restrain vessels of the United States from sailing in an armed condition, that the principle, on which those orders were issued, has ceased to exist. I therefore deem it proper to inform congress, that I no longer conceive myself justifiable in continuing them, unless in particular cases, where there may be reasonable ground of suspicion, that such vessels are intended to be employed contrary to law.

In all your proceedings, it will be important to manifest a zeal, vigour and concert in defence of the national rights, proportioned to the danger with which they are threatened.

JOHN ADAMS.

United States, March 19, 1798.

This message was called a declaration of war, and it was said it had every where excited through the country the utmost alarm—I admit that alarm was excited in consequence of this communication and that it ought to have been excited, but I believe the alarm grew rather out of the facts communicated,

than out of the communication itself—Yes, the people were alarmed, to be informed officially, that every reasonable concession had been made and that the eminent abilities which were known to characterise our commissioners, and their utmost endeavors had been exerted in vain to conciliate this haughty republic; because, they saw no other probable alternative but submission or war—But it was most artfully contrived, to propagate through the country, an opinion that the President withheld the dispatches, because he was afraid to disclose them, lest they should evince the truth of their ill founded suspicions relative to his disposition for conciliating France, and that the revocation of his orders to the officers of the customs, was tantamount to a declaration of war—Let us retrace the progress of congressional procedure in this respect—It will be recollected that after this communication, there was a motion made for the House to resolve itself into a committee of the whole to appropriate money for completing the frigates. This motion was opposed, upon the ground that it was a part of the war system as it was called and from a determination to do nothing tending towards military preparation until the dispatches were communicated—A few days after this, those very gentlemen who had so strenuously opposed the going into the subject of appropriation, became all of a sudden very anxious to go into the committee of the whole on the state of the Union, and were now perfectly ready to proceed without the dispatches. A conduct so very different from what had been exhibited a few days before, appeared to many enveloped in mystery, but many others saw in this sudden change some secret and hidden design, but all were at a loss to ascertain its nature or its extent—No sooner however, had the house gotten into this committee, than the plan was brought to light by the novel exhibition of the famous declaration of peace.

A resolution was brought forward, by which it was declared to be inexpedient "to resort to war with the French Republic." There can be no doubt, that war cannot be considered as existing, but by the declaration of it by congress, and therefore we should stand precisely in the same state after the adoption of this vague and negative resolution as before. If any act of the executive was supposed to have a tendency to war, such as withdrawing the instructions, then it was necessary to proceed immediately to counteract the effects of the measure—Why then introduce the subject by this vague, senseless resolution and why insist on making long declamatory harangues upon this resolution and refuse to take up the second which seemed calculated to remove the causes which it was said would produce war? Most people understood the object at the time and every body perfectly comprehends it at present—It was introduced for the purpose of declamation, it was a political text which meant any thing and nothing and would therefore afford ample scope for governmental impeachment. It was intended and used to excite a clamor against the President, to induce a belief he was determined on war with France, and not on account of our own injuries but to prop the "falling fortunes of Britain" and to gratify an unconquerable hatred by a public denunciation of the executive—The fall in the price of produce was ascribed not to the French arrette, which as has been shewn, strikes at the roots of its exportation, not to the rejection of our ministers, but to the President's communication—But these gentlemen had another reason for going into committee, they began to discover that the dispatches were withheld because of the apprehensions of the President as to their tendency if published to commit the safety of our envoys; That they would be published whenever they should leave France—beginning to find out too that

they contained some things unfavourable to their views of executive denunciation, they found no time was to be lost, and this accounts for their great anxiety for precipitating the house into a committee, to exhibit the declaration of peace—Every body saw plainly they did not want the dispatches, and every body saw them clogging the motion for calling for them with motions intended to defeat the object, for, by obtaining them, they knew they would be deprived of one of the best sources of executive censure. But these manœuvres were not confined to legislative tactics—There were some of their choir better calculated to shine in a different sphere. It became necessary every where to circulate letters, calling upon the people to convene, and explicitly declare their determination not to go to war, for the carriage of British manufactures, and to gratify the nice delicacies of diplomatic etiquette—For this is the amount of a labored petition from Caroline county, in Virginia, and of many others from different quarters. One member,* from Virginia, has distributed four hundred letters, stating that the long wished-for period had arrived, when our government was to be gratified with a war with France, and an alliance with Britain. The following is an extract from the letter of Mr. New, of Virginia. “But yesterday exhibited to us an alarming spectacle as it respects war with France and her allies ; but disagreeable as this may be, and ruinous, as I fear, if carried into effect, yet more so to our peace and quite at home, as it is conceived by many here to be a dangerous attack on the constitution, by the President of the United States. It is, by the message of that day, I fear we may date the relinquishment of our liberties, unless the people come forward and express their opinions in a constitutional way, and by that means prevent the encroachments of executive power.

* Mr. Claiborne.

er, and a war with a nation which has brought all Europe at her feet, and that nation a Republic." Here he inserts the message—This message is a declaration of war, as far as the President's ipse dixit can go, and it will be so considered by France. From this message it would appear as if we had nothing to do but enregister the decree and go on to drain our fellow citizens of their hard earnings, and their labours to supply his projects, and this we are called upon to do from his bare declarations, without giving us his instructions to our envoys, or their letters on the subject." It seems then that the revocation of these instructions to the customs was a declaration of war. Whilst the subject of arming merchantmen was under consideration during the summer session, the objection appeared to be rather to give it a governmental sanction than to the armament itself. It was generally conceived that the merchants had a natural right to arm, and that it had better rest upon individual responsibility and natural right, than to be authorized by the legislature.—The President had informed Congress, too, that the instructions against arming would expire at the meeting of Congress, and that unless they interposed and restrained it, the right would be exercised or not, according to the dispositions of the merchants. It was not expected that his instructions would be renewed and most of the members were satisfied they should not be renewed: nor did those gentlemen who now call the revocation of these instructions, a declaration of war, take any method to prevent arming.—But feeling the utmost solicitude for the preservation of peace, and determined to omit no expedient, calculated to secure it, he did renew them; and whilst such has been the rage of accusation against his determination to involve us in war, they have cautiously avoided any allusion to this voluntary act of the President, which to my mind is the

most conclusive evidence of his ardent desire for peace. The fact is, they were determined to transfer all the odium of the failure of the negotiation, from the directory to our government, and had they not have been brought up in the midst of their career, by the publication of the instructions and dispatches, it is impossible to calculate the consequences of such proceedings : civil war began to be talked of in some parts of the country.* These several speeches and letters so injurious to the reputation of the government, so well calculated to alienate the affections of the people from the constituted authorities, are the patriotic means which have been employed to unite our country against, we know not how soon, not merely attacks upon our commerce, but our liberty and independence. And let me ask, when France finds that notwithstanding all our advances to her for reconciliation, when every expedient has been exhausted by us, for this purpose, and she disdainfully rejects us, and her conduct is justified by constant invectives against our own government, if she has not reason to believe she may still continue to encrease her demands, and from a servile devotion to her cause they will continue to be tolerated, if not justified. I have said, and I think have proved, that the means which France has adopted for subjugating mankind, and which have proved more powerful than her arms, have been to spread the seeds of sedition and rebellion in every country, which she intends to invade, by representing to the people the tyranny of their rulers. I will readily admit that such schemes are not so likely to prevail in this country as in those which she has invaded, and whose governments she has thus subverted. In these countries, the people bending beneath the burthen of their oppressions, and all the property of the country being in the

* I have been credibly informed that it was frequently suggested in Virginia, that civil war would be the consequence of war with France.

hands of a few ; (from a supposition that their condition could not be worsted,) have been willing to make an experiment of the new doctrines of liberty and equality—In this country the great mass of our people are proprietors of the soil and possess a perfect equality of civil, religious and political rights, and therefore ought to be satisfied with their situation—But however difficult it may be in this country to excite insurrections or to induce people to flock to the standard of an invading army ; yet, our experience of the insurrection in Pennsylvania must warn us that it is not impossible—And if to produce such effects be practicable, the conduct of some of the representatives of the people, from the letters which have lately been published, seems admirably well calculated to do it—But they tell us they mean no harm and triumphantly ask who has more interest than they in the preservation of good order, and security for property, and the liberties of the country, and why should they wish to invite the French into this country ? I never thought it was the desire of these gentlemen to invite them here, although I believe their proceedings calculated to do it—I never thought them bribed by French money—I have always had but one opinion about the object of their justification of France. They do not justify France because they have an attachment to her, or because they think her capable of justification, but they have a violent antipathy to some men high in office, and they justify France to criminate these characters. Supposing that unbounded gratitude still to exist for France, which once almost deprived us of our senses, and using every expedient to keep alive those animosities against England, which has had such an influence upon our country ; they take the advantage of these supposed predilections and antipathies, and make them equally the engines of executive crimination. To suppose that men can have gratitude

for a country which has inflicted more cruelties upon our countrymen, than the savage tribes would have done were they equally powerful, and whose government unites every vice which can make a man ashamed of his nature, is what I never can believe. Give these gentlemen other grounds of accusation against the executive equally well calculated to effect their purposes and I will promise, they will compound never to say any thing more about the justification of France—Their system is a system of opposition and crimination of their opponents, and the means are to be made subservient to the end when a majority is for indirect taxation, there is no kind of tax like a land tax; a land tax is proposed and supported by a majority and most strenuously opposed by those who have once wished to derive from that source all our revenue—When preparing the materials of naval defence they are for defence upon land, when called upon to prepare for defence upon land there is no danger of invasion. Those who are apprehensive of danger and for preparing to organize a body of regular troops in case of invasion, are represented as wishing to raise standing armies to strengthen executive prerogative, and thus they endeavor to induce a belief that nothing is to be feared but our own government—With all the dexterity of political legerdemain they lug in upon all occasions the political maxim, that standing armies are dangerous to liberty, (which was introduced as a guard against executive authority) and very wisely conclude that therefore the whole government united, ought not to be permitted to create a system of defence proportioned to the nature of the attack: And whilst they contend our militia are competent to defend us against all the world united, have terrible apprehensions of ten thousand men—The object of these men appears to be to discredit the govern-

ment as at present administered, and to raise themselves to a conspicuous station—Having been mortified by their repeated and constant attempts to direct the measures of the government at their will they have determined to seek ultimate retribution in the overthrow of their opponents—This is a principle which is not peculiar to our country, climate or age; its illustration is to be found in every age, nation and government; it pervades all human nature and is to be found wherever man exists. In all countries there are two descriptions of political characters, the one in favor of the established order of things, and another opposed to it. This exists in the best of governments as well as in the worst, for otherwise we should not find it with us—Those who are opposed to the existing system of things wish to become conspicuous; in order to do this they must become popular—In the administration of every government there is only a choice of evils, for every law is a deprivation apparently of pre-existing right, tho' calculated to secure some other of greater importance—To select such measures therefore as are best calculated to secure the happiness of the people is to adopt such as are liable to exception and by making passionate representations to the ignorant and credulous of all the disadvantages of a measure without stating its advantages, the public mind becomes inflamed, the people are called upon by the clamorous and pretended guardians of their rights to cashier their oppressors, and to substitute in their places those glorious champions of their liberty who have pointed out their oppressors and the means of avoiding them in future—But no sooner are these deliverers installed in office than, forasmuch as the government must be supported and it cannot be done but by taxes or other measures which as in the case of their predecessors are but the choice of evils, they in their turn excite the clamors of some noisy dema-

gogues, are called traitors in their turn, and displaced to make room for a new set of patriots who still excel them in their former professions of devotion to the rights of the people. This is the process which all governments constantly undergo and which they will experience as long as flattery is the road to popular favor and hypocritical pretences for a singular attachment to the rights of the people, are the climax by which ambitious men climb the ascent of power.— And this general principle, and not an attachment to France (for it is impossible that any American can feel such an attachment at this time) I take to be the *primum mobile* of all the crimination of executive measures with regard to France. France, however, connects here as she does elsewhere, the opposition to our own government, with a supposed attachment to her cause, and although she may possibly be mistaken about the motives which induce this opposition and these attempts to alienate the affections of the people from the government, yet the effects are not the less favourable to her views. When the people shall have been alarmed about executive encroachment, when they shall believe we are about to exchange the President for a hereditary monarch and arm him with the most extensive powers; with the over-whelming patronage of an extensive civil list, the power of creating peers at pleasure, and all the influence of church and state united, and the power of raising standing armies without the consent of the legislature, when they believe in all this, and in that rottenness and corruption which it is said have grown out of excises and funding systems; when they believe the facts stated in the letters of their own representatives; * can they believe there exists any greater enemy than their own government, and will they not be ready to welcome the great and generous Knight Errant, who is going to and fro to deliver

* See Clay's and Findley's Letters.

mankind from their former tyrants? For men to talk of defence, whilst they thus scatter the seeds of division and about the blessings of a government and country, which they profess highly to estimate, but constantly vilify, is amongst these strange incompatibilities in the human character, for which it is impossible to account, and which perhaps is rather to be lamented than censured. Many of those who, thus disseminate the seeds of distrust, and who are thus preparing the means of their own and country's destruction, I doubt not, suppose they are rendering a meritorious service, but let those gentlemen recollect how easy it is to raise, and how difficult "to ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm"—All their fears are of executive power, but they seem to guard only the narrow pass, whilst they lay open the broad way to the temple of despotism. To suppose that in a government like ours, where every branch is elective, and where there being a periodical reversion of power into the hands of the people, and a constant opportunity of criticising the merits of former public agents, and of continuing them, if their merits deserve the public confidence, or displacing them if they have violated the duties of their trust—to say in such a government there is danger of executive encroachment, is at once to say the whole people are corrupt or are too ignorant for self-government—And as I believe in neither the one nor the other, I have but little fear that tyranny will approach us through the medium of gradual executive encroachment—I will not say however that this avenue ought not to be guarded—But there is a kind of executive power, much to be dreaded, when it has arrived, and more suddenly created than the former, I mean the executive power of Mobocracy—And of this sort of executive power which has been for years, and is now raging in Europe with a violence, whose hands nothing can stay, these gentlemen seem not to fear—

I fear it greatly I confess, because it combines legislative, executive and judicial power, which is the definition of despotism, and wherever it directs its destructive course, it rages *ad internecionem* and spares neither age nor sex, nor christian nor jew, and lays level in the dust all who have too much sense or virtue to participate in its blind and rapacious fury ; but I hate it also, because it never fails to terminate in strengthening the hands of that very power which gentlemen fear so much, the power of the executive—And it is not because I wish to strengthen the executive arm, but because I do not wish it to be too much invigorated, for the security of my person and property, that I warn my countrymen against the pernicious measures which have been soobstinately pursued.—Did I wish to nerve the arm of executive power, I would commence an indiscriminate opposition to all its operations, predict that this and that measure would produce inevitable destruction, warn the people frequently that their liberties were in danger, take upon me to excite insurrections and mobs against the government and laws of the country : for by this I should evince the necessity of giving the government power, if it did not already possess it, of defending itself against such attacks, and gain to it more perhaps than was necessary for that purpose ; and by frequently calling out, danger, when no danger existed, my calls would be unattended to, when it really approached. But if I know my own heart, I want nothing more than to support the constitution of our country, being fully satisfied that is the most perfect model of a government that ever did exist and wishing that if it ever be changed, it be changed in the manner which itself directs—But it is not administered according to its principles—And what are its principal objects ? To give protection to person and property, in which words will be found to exist the

perfection of government—Is any man deprived of his life, liberty or his property, but by the judgment of his peers, or the law of the land, which law is the result of the general will previously expressed? Its most steady opponents have acknowledged, they enjoy all the liberty and happiness here which a government can afford—It becomes us then my fellow citizens to be satisfied with our situation, to compare it with the situation of the most favored nation in the world and to derive pleasure from the contrast—Let us unite to a man in the repulsion of external attacks, and let us, at least for the present, disregard the idle clamorings of disappointed ambition, executive hatred and of honest minds led astray by their passions, or the artifices of others—Yes, my fellow citizens, we will rally around the standard of government, we will be a free, a great and happy people—Already has our government passed the fiery ordeal of Jacobinical censure and examination and arisen above the foul atmosphere of calumnious falsehood into the purer regions of the affections of its country—Already have we said, may political revolution never approach us, but when like the storm in the natural world, it may be necessary to expel the corruptions and dissipate the noxious vapor of the political atmosphere—Yes, the instructions to our envoys and their dispatches have raised their voice and spoken with the powers of thunder; the people have listened and have heard. The mighty system of governmental impeachment, which has been years in maturing lies prostrate in the dust and there is scarcely a trace of the mighty ruins. The attachment of its friends is confirmed—the clamors of its enemies confounded. The purity and wisdom of our government is open to every man's view and those who have not before seen it, are astonished at the event and until Americans have unlearned what they have learnt and

unseen what is, and always I hope will be open to their view, the purity of its intentions and wisdom of its measures, the government will be enthroned in the affections of the people—And what have they learnt in the government of France? They have learnt that she is governed by a horde of profligate tyrants, who are only to be understood by contraries; who talk about tyranny in others, and who are Neroes themselves; who talk about the simplicity of republicanism and who demand as much respect as their ancient monarchs; who preface all violations of national right by invectives against others for doing the same; who preach to men about liberty and equality with a poignard at their breasts—The inconsistent and whimsical and wicked attempts to take away the force of the dispatches will only recoil upon their authors and prove an antidote to their previous attempts to poison the public mind.—These sheets have been written at those short intervals of leisure which, the important business of congress, has rendered both limited and uncertain and will, I fear, be found defective in that arrangement and method, to which frequent interruptions are extremely inimical—If, however, the author should herein anywise have contributed to a vindication of his country's government, against the slanderers of its purity, if he shall have exposed the system of the plunderers of the rights of nations and shewn the necessity of uniting in our defence, he shall believe his time, could not have been occupied in any thing more honorable to himself or more beneficial to his country.

ERRATA.

- In 1 page, line 5th—for suspicion, read surprize.
In 4 page, line 15th—for possels, read profess.
In 7 page, line 16th—for see, read sees.
In 8 page, line 28th—for make, read revoke.
In page 27, line 32d—for refuses, read refuse.
In page 40, line 12th—for could read would.
In page 48, line 2d of note—for plunder, read injure.
In page 49, line 18th—at the word invective, make a period.
In page 52, line 13th—for procure, read maintain.
In page 69, line 13th—make a period at the word end.

9 JU '64

A P P E N D I X.



THE revolution in Geneva is one of the best illustrations of the principles upon which France conducts her affairs in regard to other nations, any where to be found ; it may not, therefore, be improper here to give some of its outlines. The French entered Geneva in order to secure 20,000 stand of muskets, which they said they stood in need of, and in order to carry on their operations to greater advantage against the dominions of the king of Sardinia. They had no quarrel with the Genevese, but took possession of their city and muskets, because they wanted the one, and because the other would enable them to attack to greater advantage their enemies. This is the reason which the French assigned—But the Genevese received information, which was afterwards confirmed, that they intended to take Savoy, incorporate it with Geneva and make of them one of those satellite republics, which she has since been establishing, wherever she extends her arms—They therefore immediately called for the aid of their ancient allies the Swiss, who immediately dispatched off for their protection 1600 men, but before their arrival the French had taken possession of the capitol. This is the secret order of the French, (to general Montesquieu) “ To march to Geneva in order to give freedom of action to the friends of liberty who were in considerable numbers there, and to establish a form of government suitable to their wishes.” The Genevese deputies who were sent to enquire of the French the cause of this unexpected attack, received for answer, that “ the government

of Geneva had insulted the French Republic, by calling in the aid of the Swiss to repel an attack which was never intended to be made, and which nothing but that step had suggested ; that the magistrates of Geneva were (perhaps without meaning it) the abettors of the enemies of France, and as a proof of their ill will towards her, had permitted some of the emigrants to settle in Geneva and others to pass through it, in making their retreat into other countries." Finding, however, that they must either desist for the present or be involved in a war with the whole Helvetic confederacy, the injury of which to their projects, was very strongly represented by their commander, they gave him orders to enter into a treaty with the Genevese and to make it in such a manner as to leave them every advantage which could result to them if they had retained their capitol, and particularly to stipulate for leaving a French garrison within the town. The Genevese refused to treat on these terms and the French ultimately agreed to withdraw their troops ten leagues from Geneva, but took care at the same time to stipulate for the dismissal of the Swiss—After this treaty was partly executed and the Swiss dismissed, the French ministry refused to ratify it, unless certain articles were inserted in it, which Genet was sent off to propose—As burthensome as these were the Genevese agreed to insert them, and supposed then that the treaty was final—Sometime after this however, this treaty was called by Brissot at the head of the diplomatic committee "an ignominious capitulation" and he urged to the convention the propriety of breaking it, which they accordingly did. They then gave peremptory orders to dismiss all the troops of the Swiss, and promised that their troops should respect the Genevese territory—These are some of Brissots observations to the convention—" Geneva must not expect peace until perfect political equality is naturalized within her walls. She must ex-

pest no treaty with us, but the introduction and establishment of our principles—Undoubtedly France will never forget her principle of not interfering in the concerns of other nations, but she must never forget her oath to relieve all nations from oppression and to inform all nations of their rights. There must be a revolution in Geneva, or a counter revolution in France—The only question therefore, is, whether a free people can or ought to bind itself by treaties, and whether every treaty is not unnecessary with republics, as it is indecent with every government which does not derive its authority immediately from the people.”—Thus the treaty was broken and the Swiss troops all dismissed.—But again the Genevese began to exhibit a firm and undaunted spirit, and their assembly, composed in person of at least three fourths of its citizens, issued a second decree for calling in the Swiss.—The national militia convened and communicated to the magistracy, their determination to support it—The French ministry who had before calculated on a much larger party in their favour, and who had called the decree before mentioned, a part of “the perverse and traitorous behaviour of the magistrates,” and for which they were prepared to punish them, discovered that it would not do yet to put their plan into execution, they then changed their system of open force to the more successful one of secret machinations—they began to disseminate their seditious doctrines, and soon enlisted under their banners, all aliens and class known there by the name of natives, and who were descendants of foreigners not entitled to a seat in the assembly of the people, and who composed about one fourth of the whole population—These natives and aliens began to call each other *Citizen*, then to wear the cap of liberty, to sing French songs, &c. In the mean time, the French contrary to their treaty, kept an army in the neighbourhood, to give protection and boldness to their

devotees, and in a very little time such was the progress of her doctrines, that the government was compelled to offer perfect equality of political rights to all persons, whether citizens, natives, or aliens.—But this offer instead of quieting the malcontents, by removing the only foundation of their complaints, only strengthened them in their demands; for these liberty and equality men, who were discontented because there was not a perfect equality enjoyed by them with others, now declared they would not accept of any terms short of putting all the powers of government in their own hands, (a useful lesson to the American dupes of modern democracy) and ran to arms insisting for a convention to be called, to put these plans into operation—These men even at this time did not form more than one fourth of the people, but a French army was in the neighbourhood, and had just received the orders of the convention for assisting the oppressed to throw off the yoke of their oppressors, and were ready to march at a moment's warning to aid in their designs—all the magistrates and members of the councils resigned their seats and henceforth was introduced into that country, all the horrors of French principles—their democratic and executive clubs, revolutionary tribunals, proscriptions, robbery and murder.—And thus has Geneva, once the seat of literature, the arts and virtue and wealth and liberty and laws, been erased from the list of nations and converted into the bear-garden of democracy. From such a fate good Lord deliver the American people—The above is taken chiefly from Divernois's account of this revolution, a work which I cannot too strongly recommend to the perusal of every friend to laws and liberty, as an excellent illustration of that abominable system of tyranny, which in the name of liberty is every where prostrating the rights of mankind, and reducing the civilized world, to one wide extended waste.

